

BEIJING (AP) — Residents of a village of dwarfs in central China have been found to have a genetic defect, scientists say. The village, known as Little People Village, is located in a mountainous area of central China. The residents of the village are all dwarfs, and the village has been a mystery for many years. Scientists have now found that the residents of the village have a genetic defect that causes dwarfism.

Spanish villagers hunt goat from tower at fiesta

MANAGANEN, DE LA POLVEROSA (AP) — Residents of a northern Spanish village have been hunting a goat from a tower at a fiesta. The goat is a symbol of good luck, and the residents of the village have been hunting it for many years. The goat is a symbol of good luck, and the residents of the village have been hunting it for many years.

Bird plunges Senegal into darkness

PAKAR (AP) — A bird plunged into the Senegal River, plunging the country into darkness. The bird was a large eagle, and it was seen by many people. The bird was a large eagle, and it was seen by many people.

Hundreds trapped on Canadian ice

PARIS (AP) — A French company offers two-wheel taxis. The company has been offering two-wheel taxis in Paris for many years. The company has been offering two-wheel taxis in Paris for many years.

France sells medicines to Iraq

PARIS (R) — French companies have signed their first contracts to sell medicines to Iraq since an international embargo was eased a month ago, a French official said on Monday. The companies, whose names have not been released, are acting under a U.N. plan that allows Baghdad to sell crude oil in exchange for food and medicine to help relieve the suffering of ordinary Iraqis hit by Gulf war sanctions. "We received the requests for authorisation on Friday. These are the first ones (for medicine)," the official at the French budget ministry told Reuters. The official gave no details of the medicines involved but said the value of contracts signed so far was fairly low. Iraq has said it urgently needs both food and medicine to tackle malnutrition and other problems caused by the economic blockade imposed to punish it for its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

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الجزيرة العربية

Arafat holds back declaring state until final-status talks end

PNA assails Israeli programme to tighten its grip on Arab Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(Agencies) — Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat has agreed to hold back on declaring independence until after the end of talks with Israel on a final peace settlement, the daily Yediot Aharonot reported Monday.

"I do not intend to declare the Palestinian state before the end of the negotiations on a final settlement," Mr. Arafat told the Israeli newspaper in a short interview. "For the time being, it is much more important to implement what has been agreed. There are some difficulties, but with good will these can be overcome," he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned the Palestinians last week against unilaterally declaring a state of their own, saying Israel's retaliation would be harsh. "In case of a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state, our reaction will be very harsh because that would be a violation of the accords concluded with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA)," he said, without elaborating.

"The question of the final status of the Palestinian entity can only be settled within the framework of the final-status negotiations," Mr. Netanyahu said. Under the Hebron withdrawal deal signed nearly two weeks ago, negotiations on a final settlement between Israel and the Palestinians are due to start in March and be completed by May 1999.

In Israel, meanwhile, leading members of the ruling Likud and opposition Labour parties ended years of bitter division and announced a formula for such a final accord with the Palestinians.

Israel bars Hebronites from repairing houses

ISRAELI ORDERED a halt Monday to the renovation of Palestinian homes near Jewish settlements in downtown Hebron.

"This is a very dangerous decision that will directly affect the peace process," Hebron Mayor Mustafa Nasha said in protest. "It does not look good for the future. This is the right of the city and should not be interfered with."

Most of Hebron was turned over to Palestinian control earlier this month, but Israeli troops remain in 20 per cent of the city in which 450 Jewish settlers live, along with more than 20,000 Palestinians.

The Israeli order, signed by Major General Uzi Dayan, bars construction or renovation in buildings near the five compounds where Jewish settlers live.

"Any construction taking place in them will be halted forthwith," the order says. The army said the order was intended to prevent construction or renovation in buildings that are "security risks to the Jewish settlements."

Army spokesmen could not, however, explain why the buildings were security risks, citing army policy that prevents them from commenting on security matters.

Encouraged by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Palestinians last fall began renovating dozens of crumbling and abandoned stone buildings in downtown Hebron, saying that the settlers might try to move in if they were left empty.

Khaled Qawasmeh, head engineer of the renovation project, said 35 houses were being renovated. Under the agreement on Hebron signed between Israel and the Palestinians this month, Palestinian city authorities are responsible for civil matters such as construction — except for specific limits on the height of buildings surrounding the Jewish areas.

"This is not in the agreement and it's a violation," Mr. Qawasmeh said of the army order. "This is a political decision, and it's going to affect the peace."

live and does not rule out defining the final Palestinian entity as an independent state, with restrictions. Palestinian officials rejected the proposal, and Mr. Netanyahu says he is

(Continued on page 3)

Netanyahu hopes Rubinstein nomination will calm scandal

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The Israeli government was hoping Monday that the nomination of a respected jurist as attorney-general would help defuse a scandal over alleged illegal dealings in an aborted attempt to appoint a close associate of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the post.

Officials said Mr. Netanyahu's cabinet would meet Wednesday to approve the appointment of Judge Elyakim Rubinstein, 50, as attorney-general after the first nominee, Roni Bar-On, was forced to withdraw his candidacy.

Mr. Rubinstein's nomination was announced several hours after police launched a criminal investigation into allegations that Mr. Bar-On had been picked for the top justice position on Jan. 10 as part of a deal to keep a key figure in Mr. Netanyahu's coalition government from being convicted on bribery charges.

According to the reports which first surfaced on Israeli state television, the choice of Mr. Bar-On, a senior member of Mr. Netanyahu's Likud Party, was imposed on the government by Arik Deri, the head of the powerful religious party Shas who is on trial for corruption.

Channel 1 television reported that Mr. Deri obtained a promise of a plea-bargain in his corruption trial from Mr. Bar-On and then threatened to with-

draw his party's support from the Netanyahu government if the Likud official was not made attorney-general.

Several ministers said on Sunday that if the allegations proved true, Mr. Netanyahu's right-wing coalition would undoubtedly fall.

The choice of Mr. Rubinstein to replace Mr. Bar-On as the government's nominee as attorney-general was widely praised across the political spectrum and senior officials said they hoped it would help counter the uproar over the Bar-On affair.

"Netanyahu understood that he had to quickly find an irrefragable attorney-general if the whole issue was going to stop poisoning the political climate in the country," a senior official told the Haaretz newspaper.

Mr. Rubinstein, a wide-liked jurist known for his sense of humour, led peace talks with the Arabs from November 1991 to 1993, first under right-wing government and then as Labour successor. An observant Jew and Arabic speaker, Mr. Rubinstein has always been a man of consensus and his nomination as attorney-general won praise on Monday from both the political right and left.

Meanwhile police pursued their investigation of the Bar-On affair Monday after interviewing the television journalists who first reported the alleged dealings by Mr. Deri and claim to have concrete evi-

dence to back up the story. But police sources said the Channel 1 team, including the crime reporter who broke the story, refused to reveal their sources and had yet to provide tape recordings they have concerning the affair.

Mr. Netanyahu's chief of bureau on Monday announced plans to resign, reportedly because he felt pushed aside by more powerful aides to the prime minister. David Agmon told Mr. Netanyahu he intended to leave by the end of January, or five months after being appointed.



Bedouins from the Jahalin tribe lie on the ground after they were wounded during clashes with the Israeli police near the Maale Adumim settlement east of Jerusalem on Monday in an Israeli operation to evict dozens of bedouins of the tribe who have lived in the area for some 40 years and to make room for the expansion of the settlement (AFP photo)

Israelis raze more Jahalin homes; several hurt in clashes

JAHALIN BEDOUIN ENCAMPMENT

(Agencies) — Israeli troops dragged bedouin tribesmen away from their homes Monday and bulldozed their metal shacks to make way for an expanding Jewish settlement.

About 10 men were injured when 100 Israelis used clubs to beat back some 200 people who tried to prevent the troops from razing a camp where four families of the Jahalin bedouin clan lived near the West Bank settlement of Maale Adumim, witnesses said.

Construction workers loaded the bedouin's mattresses, tents and personal belongings onto trucks. Yellow bulldozers plowed into their ramshackle metal shacks, crumpling them to the ground. Solemn-faced children watched from a nearby rooftop.

About 45 families from the Jahalin bedouin tribe have lived and grazed their goats and sheep for decades on land east of Jerusalem. In recent years, that land has been swallowed up by the red-roofed houses of Maale Adumim, the largest Jewish settlement in the West Bank.

After a protracted court battle, Israel's supreme court ruled last May that the Jahalin must leave the area. The first shacks were bulldozed earlier this month.

An Israeli military spokesman, Lieutenant Peter Lerner, played down the violence, saying only four people were slightly hurt "in some pushing and shoving." Two people were arrested in the incident, he said.

Lt. Lerner said that in all five families were removed from two different Jahalin

camp near Maale Adumim on Monday, two weeks after a first family from the clan was forcibly relocated to a site near a garbage dump in the Abu Dis neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

The Jahalin clan has lived in shacks and tents outside Maale Adumim since the 1950s after they were expelled by Israeli authorities from their original homes in the southern desert.

Police began the forced relocations on Jan. 14 after months of negotiations failed to convince the Jahalin to move voluntarily to the new site.

In May 1995, Israel's supreme court backed Israeli claims the land where the Jahalin have been living is "state" property, while the bedouins say it is owned by Palestinians who gave them permission to set up their camps.

"What is happening to the Jahalin is indicative of what can happen to Palestinians anywhere who happen to be getting in the way of the expansion of Israeli settlements," said a statement issued Monday by the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Non-Violence, an independent human rights group.

"The transfer of the Jahalin is setting a very dangerous precedent," it said. "Such moves are illegal and inhumane."

But Lt. Lerner said such complaints were unfounded and that the alternative site, which has running water and electricity unlike the current Jahalin camps, was an improvement for the bedouins.

"Compared to their living conditions

(Continued on page 3)

Russia confirms its initiative on means to revive peace process

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Lebanese President Rafik Hariri and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa have accepted an invitation by the Russian government to hold talks in Moscow "within the next two months," the embassy of the Russian Federation here confirmed.

The Moscow talks will focus on "a range of issues related to the Mideast peace process and bilateral relations between Russia and the Middle East countries," Russian ambassador to Jordan Alexander Saltanov said in an interview with the Jordan Times.

The talks will also provide a "framework to find out ways and means of coordination with these countries to reactivate the peace process, realising the agreements already signed and providing a fresh start for negotiating new treaties," Mr. Saltanov added.

The four leaders stated their intention to pay official visits to Russia on the occasion of the three-day Middle East tour which Russian President Boris Yeltsin's Special Envoy to the Mideast peace process and Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk concluded Sunday.

Though Mr. Saltanov declared that the four Middle East leaders will pay "separate visits" to Moscow, Mr. Posuvalyuk was quoted by international news agencies as saying that Russia could host "certain meetings between Israelis and Palestinians or between Israelis and Syrians."

After talks in Damascus, Mr. Posuvalyuk visited Amman on Saturday, on the second leg of his Mideast tour, and then proceeded to Tel Aviv, where he met with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi.

Before leaving Moscow on Friday, Mr. Posuvalyuk was quoted as saying that Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu were expected in Moscow in February and March respectively.

In Amman, Mr. Posuvalyuk chaired a meeting of "some of Russia's ambassadors to the region to discuss ways to reactivate the peace process and assure its stability and continuity," Mr. Saltanov said. The meeting was attended by the Russian ambassadors to Amman, Cairo, Damascus and Tel Aviv as well as the Russian Federation's representative to Chairman of the Palestinian National Authority Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Posuvalyuk's mission to the Middle East and the invitations forwarded by the Russian government to Palestinians, Israelis, Syrians and Lebanese are part of Russia's policy to boost its role as a "co-sponsor of the Mideast peace process and co-chairman of the 1992 Madrid conference," Mr. Saltanov said.

The Russian Federation inherited from the former Soviet Union a tradition of long and friendly relations with Syria, and observers see the increasing role of Russia in the peace process as one of the keys to bring

(Continued on page 3)

U.S. missions boost security amid threats

RIYADH (AFP) — The U.S. embassy here has urged Americans to be more alert and said U.S. diplomatic missions and military bases in Saudi Arabia have bolstered security because of the risk of further attack. "The embassy continues to receive new information suggesting that terrorist action against U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia remains possible," the U.S. embassy said in a statement. The reports were "cause for concern" although they are unconfirmed, it said. "Over the last several months the embassy, consulates general and the U.S. military elements throughout the country have reviewed their security postures and made improvements wherever possible," it added. The embassy also urged the estimated 40,000 Americans in the kingdom to "take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness," especially during the month of Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr holiday afterward.

King affirms he underwent two knee surgeries, thanks Jordanians for their concern

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday affirmed that he had undergone surgery on both knees to correct slight problems and that now he was recuperating. The affirmation came in a cable the King sent to Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti thanking him for a letter of congratulations that the prime minister sent to the King upon the successful surgery, which was performed at the Al Hussein Medical Centre on Saturday. The King left the medical centre on Sunday.

Thanking Mr. Kabariti for the congratulations, the King said he had agreed "to undergo the two surgeries at the same time after it was found out that a cartilage in the left knee caused a severe pain and a malfunction in the right knee caused by the Umra pilgrimage forced physicians to remove the cartilage in the left knee and fix the right knee through surgery."

The operation was carried out by an Austrian physician Dr. Seenk, assisted by Jordanian doctors and involved the use of fiber-optic device for diagnosis and slight surgery.

"I relay to all Jordanian my gratitude for their concern over my health," said the King, reiterating that he would continue to serve his people.

In his letter of congratulations, Prime Minister Kabariti described the King as a unique figure and wished him speedy recovery to resume his duties.

King Hussein also received congratulatory phone calls from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Oman's Sultan Qaboos Bin Saeed, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, and Prince Fahd Bin Sultan.

Lower House of Parliament Speaker Saad Hayel Srour also sent a cable of congratulations to the King.

Arafat due here today after fog delays visit

AMMAN (Agencies) —

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat postponed on Monday a planned visit to Jordan due to bad weather and is expected to make the trip today (Tuesday), the Jordan News Agency, Ptra, said.

Mr. Arafat was expected to fly to Amman on Monday for a one-day visit and talks with His Majesty King Hussein, who underwent minor knee surgery on Sunday.

Jordanian officials said Mr. Arafat was also due to hold talks with Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Middle East peace moves.

The Jordanian helicopter which was to bring Mr. Arafat could not take off because of thick fog and low visibility, officials said.

The talks between King Hussein and Mr. Arafat are expected focus on the next steps in the implementation of the autonomy agreement signed by the Palestinians and Israel after the Jewish state handed over 80 per cent of the West Bank town of Hebron almost two weeks ago.

The King played a key role in mediating the Hebron agreement, which was signed by Mr. Arafat

and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Jan. 15, when it appeared that Israeli-Palestinian negotiations were almost near collapse.

The King's successful effort in narrowing the Israeli-Palestinian differences has drawn appreciation from not only the Palestinians and Israel but also world leaders.

Following the signing and implementation of the Hebron agreement, Jordan has called for quick moves towards resuming the final status negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel as called for in their interim autonomy accords signed in 1994.

Arafat to visit U.S.

A Palestinian National Authority (PNA) official said meanwhile Mr. Arafat was planning a tour of the United States, including a White House meeting with President Bill Clinton, on Feb. 21.

"President Arafat has accepted the invitation of President Clinton to visit the White House and meet with American officials," said Nabih Shaath, international cooperation

(Continued on page 3)

Sudan vows to retake territory from rebels

KHARTOUM (Agencies) —

Sudanese Justice Minister Abdul Bassit Sabdarat has vowed that celebrations commemorating the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan would be held in the town of Kummuk, which was recently captured by rebel troops.

"The next call to prayer for the feast will be at Kummuk," he told a convoy of army troops heading on Sunday to the battle front along the eastern border with Ethiopia.

"Liberating our territory poses no problem," Mr. Sabdarat was quoted as saying by the government daily Al Sudan Al Hadih.

The government is mobilising troops in preparation for a counter-offensive against the rebels to recapture lost territory in the Blue Nile region.

For two weeks now, hundreds of trucks transporting army recruits and volunteers have been seen heading to the front.

On Sunday, the government

said its troops killed more than 300 invading Ethiopian soldiers in fighting near the eastern border, but opposition officials denied that any such offensive had been launched.

Sudan has been in the throes of civil war since 1984, when the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA), led by John Garang, rose up against the regime in Khartoum in a campaign to end the dominance of the Arab and Muslim north over the largely Christian and animist south.

Khartoum accuses Ethiopia and Eritrea of backing the rebel forces. Both Addis Ababa and Asmara deny the claim. Ethiopia has not officially reacted to reports of a clash with Sudanese troops.

The rebels have seized 2,000 square kilometres or 15 per cent of Blue Nile state since Jan. 12. Uganda has joined Ethiopia and Eritrea in a plot to destabilise Sudan, a senior Sudanese official said in remarks published on Monday.

Turkey seeking more Israeli weapons

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Turkey is seeking large-scale Israeli involvement in a 150 billion dollar, 25-year plan to strengthen its military, a Turkish official said in an interview published here on Monday.

Sitki Orun, a retired general who is an adviser to the state Turkish armed forces foundation, told the Jerusalem Post newspaper that Israeli contractors were needed to help carry out the military buildup, notably due to reticence in the United States and Europe to selling large quantities of weapons to Ankara.

Mr. Orun specifically mentioned a Belgian decision earlier this month to cancel a planned weapons sale to Ankara and he said Washington was hesitating to grant an export license for Super Cobra attack helicopters to Turkey.

Foreign governments have expressed concern over alleged human rights violations linked to the Turkish government's campaign against separatist Kurds and over rising tension with Cyprus.

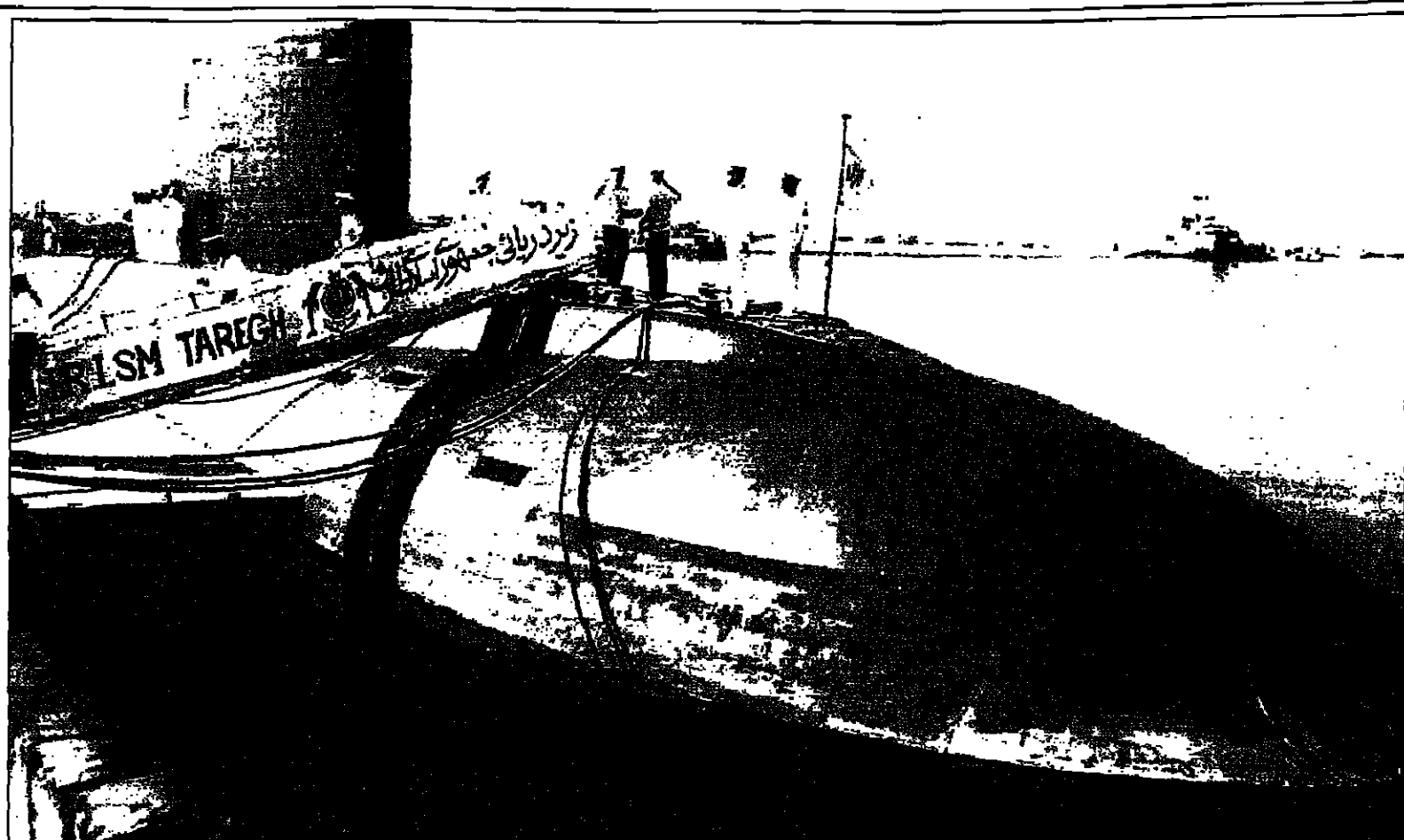
"These types of developments are to the benefit of Israel," Mr. Orun said. "If Belgium does not give us the weapons, we'll buy them somewhere else."

Turkey is especially interested in looking at Israel's Merkava tank as a possible co-production partner for its programme to produce 800 battle tanks in a deal estimated to be worth some \$3.2 billion, he said.

Mr. Orun told the newspaper he was to meet Monday and Tuesday with Israeli firms which could participate in a defence and aviation fair run by the Armed Forces Foundation, the government defence holding company.

Israel and Turkey signed a major military cooperation agreement in 1995 involving cooperation in arms development and training.

Despite initial opposition to the agreement within the Islamic-dominated government which came to power in Ankara last June, Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan last month approved one of its key elements, a \$600 million deal under which Israel will upgrade 54 Turkish warplanes.



IRANIAN SUB: This picture undated shows the Russian-made submarine 'Taregh' belonging to the Iranian navy. Iran said last week it had deployed its third Russian-made submarine, prompting fears among its neighbours and their Western allies that they would threaten oil shipping in the Gulf. But the commander of Iran's ground forces, General Ahmad Dabbin, told official newspapers that the submarines are not a threat to any country and Iran will only use them for defensive purposes (AFP photo)

Iraq lives on smuggling through north

ZAKHO (AFP) — On winding mountain roads in Kurdistan, trucks carrying smuggled Iraqi oil drive north to Turkey as others head into Iraq with food and goods like cement and steel which are banned under U.N. sanctions.

The contraband is not only delivered to markets in government-held areas of Iraq but also to those in Iran, while Kurdish factions which control northern Iraq tax the trade to raise funds for their autonomous institutions.

The smuggling through Kurdistan, where the Iraqi government withdrew following a 1991 Kurdish revolt, has kept Iraq afloat since crippling U.N. sanctions were imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

A Western diplomat in Baghdad estimated that Iraq illegally exported 280,000 barrels of oil per day through Turkey and Iran, before it was allowed to resume limited exports in December under a humanitarian deal with the United Nations.

After crossing the border, the trucks from Turkey unload around 1.5 tonnes of goods and most of them return home after filling up with Iraqi oil.

In dozens of makeshift service stations — concrete structures housing tanks bearing the names Sindi petrol, Mustafa petrol, or Blind petrol — the trucks fill up with 3,000 liters of fuel in special containers attached to them.

At the border post of Ibrahim Al Khalil, around five kilometres from the Iraqi city of Zakho, hundreds of trucks line up at dawn to cross back to Turkey over bridges spanning the Habur River.

The truck companies make a living from this trade in which they buy gasoline for three cents to the litre in Kurdistan and sell it for more than a dollar at home.

The goods they have delivered are then loaded onto Iraqi vans and trucks which travel to the rest of Kurdistan and to Baghdad where the black market is thriving.

Hidden under canvas sheets, they carry cement blocks and steel girders in violation of the embargo. Turkish-made satellite dishes can be bought for \$2,500 in Kurdistan.

Some trucks with Turkish licence plates cross the checkpoint at Faida, between Dohuk and Mosul, to enter Iraqi government-held areas.

"We even saw them bring in marble for the palaces of Saddam Hussein," a humanitarian worker said.

Shipments of American cigarettes meanwhile are delivered to Iraq, with some sent back immediately to Turkey after they are taxed as re-exports.

But most of the cigarettes are sent on to Iraq, according to a Westerner who has lived in the region for years.

Albright will change tough style — Saudi paper

RIYADH (AFP) — New U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will soften her tough style and choose her words carefully as the top diplomat of the world's superpower, a newspaper said Monday.

"Ms. Albright, who was known at the United Nations as an impulsive and tense character with a harsh tone, will change," said Al Riyadh, which reflects official Saudi views.

"Her job at the U.N. was more an honorary post and a platform, unlike her new duties as head of diplomacy of a superpower where her words will be examined under a magnifying glass."

Al Riyadh said President Bill Clinton chose Ms. Albright as Secretary of State during his second term because she is one to take initiative and says the right thing at the right time.

"It's perhaps the difficult jobs awaiting the American president that led him to choose" Ms. Albright, the daily said. Saudi Arabia is the main U.S. ally in the region, but U.S. officials have accused Saudi authorities of failing to cooperate in the investigation into the June 25 truck bombing which killed 19 U.S. airmen in Dhahran.

Ms. Albright appeared cautious when asked to comment on the issue during her first press conference on Friday, saying the Saudis had been cooperative and that Washington hoped for full cooperation for the rest of the investigation.

that 12 demonstrators were briefly taken into custody but no charges were filed. A Cypriot police spokesman said the protesters had been detained for their own safety.

Mr. Wynn-Jones said all British soldiers taking part in the exercises had been told "they must take care of the environment."

A 1996 study by the World Bank on the development of the wider Akamas peninsula region proposed declaring the Akamas forest as a nature reserve park, stressing the need to protect its environmental uniqueness.

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Cypriot environmentalists blocked British military exercises on Monday by scattering into woods on the island's remote Akamas peninsula, police and witnesses said.

"We are trying to remove the activists from the firing range for their own protection," a police spokesman said. "It is not our intention to clash with them."

Around 15 local activists spent the night camped on the northwestern peninsula to protest against live-firing exercises scheduled to start on Monday.

A police helicopter started searching the firing range for activists who dispersed into the woods when anti-riot police appeared on the scene. Some activists were detained and escorted away by police, who were still looking for the remainder, witnesses said.

In the meantime, 35 soldiers from the British base of Episkopi on the island's southern coast arrived in Akamas to start their exercises.

The infantry training, in which live ammunition was to be used, ends on Friday.

"It is our intention that the exercises go ahead," said Mervyn Wynne-Jones, a spokesman for the British bases in Cyprus.

Soldiers from two military bases which Britain has retained on the island since independence in 1960 are allowed to train in the Akamas for up to 70 days a year.

Albright will change tough style — Saudi paper

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel calls for trade offensive in Vietnam

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The trade ministry called Monday for a major initiative to boost trade with Vietnam, saying the socialist nation's growing economy held business opportunities worth hundreds of millions of dollars for Israeli firms. Releasing the results of a study into investment opportunities in Vietnam, the ministry's export institute said the volume of Israeli activity in the country could reach \$180 million in the agrotechnology sector, \$160 million in telecommunications and \$300 million in infrastructure. The institute cautions however that bureaucratic red tape, corruption and a chronic shortage of foreign currency remain obstacles to business in Vietnam, which established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1993.

Egypt mufti says Israel visits taboo

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's highest-ranking Islamic official has said visiting Israel is taboo, siding with the Egyptian Coptic Christian pope. "Travelling to Israel for tourism is taboo because it supports the Israeli economy at the expense of Arab and Muslim economies," Mufti Nasr Farid Wasseil said in remarks published in Al Gomhuria newspaper on Monday. The government-owned daily said he was speaking at a religious conference at the Nile Delta city of Tanta. Pope Shenouda III, spiritual leader of the Egyptian Coptic Church, has excommunicated some of his flock for visiting Arab East Jerusalem because it is under Israeli control. The Egyptian government has neither prevented nor encouraged Egyptians who try to visit Jerusalem on pilgrimage but controversial matters of state are normally referred to the mufti for his religious approval.

Expatriates with AIDS deported from Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait deported 37 expatriate workers in 1996 who were found to have AIDS when tested by the health authorities, a senior health official said on Monday. The acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) sufferers were among 916 foreign workers sent home after they were found to be suffering from a range of illnesses including malaria and tuberculosis, head of the public health administration Rashid Abdel Aziz Al Owaish told the daily Al Rai Al Aam. Mr. Owaish said the deported expatriates were among 174,000 foreign workers who arrived in Kuwait in 1996, and who were all obliged to undergo a series of medical tests to become eligible for residence visas. He added that the number of AIDS sufferers deported was lower last year than in 1995.

Iranian illegals seized in southern Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese police arrested 21 Iranians, Chinese and other Asians on Monday on suspicion of smuggling themselves into Japan by sea. The prefectural police of Nagasaki in southern Japan seized 11 Iranians, three Pakistanis and two Indians, all in their 20s and 30s, a police spokesman said. "The suspects said they were among 25 people who had come to Japan on a fishing boat from the South Korean port of Pusan in order to work here," he said, adding police were searching the rest of them. The Kumamoto prefectural police, meanwhile, arrested five Chinese who did not have passports. They also said there had been more than a dozen people who had come to Japan with them aboard a boat from southern China, a police spokesman said.

Somali businessman claims \$20m from U.N.

NAIROBI (AFP) — A Somali businessman is claiming some \$20 million in rent arrears from the United Nations for using his compound in Mogadishu during the world body's intervention in Somalia, the East African weekly newspaper reported Monday. Abdi Hosh Ashkir, currently a refugee in Kenya, said U.S. troops serving in the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) occupied his compound, near Mogadishu's airport, during their stay there in 1993 and 1994 without compensation. The compound, which the Americans named Hunter Base, contained before Somalia's civil war a hotel, apartments, a dairy farm, an electric power plant and a car assembly line, the East African quoted Ashkir as saying.

Kuwait sends home alleged Saudi smugglers

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has foiled an alleged attempt to smuggle illicit drugs by two Saudi Arabian nationals who were handed to the kingdom, a newspaper reported on Monday. Saudi Arabia beheads convicted drug smugglers by the sword in public while neighbouring Kuwait made the offence a capital crime in 1995. "After a violent pursuit in territorial waters, the coast guards arrested two Saudi infiltrators who were trying to smuggle drugs into Kuwait," Al Seyassah daily quoted an Interior Ministry official source as saying. Interior Ministry officials were not immediately available for comment on the newspaper report. Kuwait has not yet joined a Gulf Arab security treaty but the newspaper said the extradition was "in accordance with an agreement signed in this respect."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

13:30 Cartoon (Captain Planet)

14:00 French Programme — Sciences Cartoon

14:30 Dog House

15:00 Feature Film — "Something for Joe"

16:50 Call for Prayer and Ifar

17:30 You Bet Your Life

18:00 Serie — La Lumiere Des Justes

18:15 Magazine — Extra Large

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Murphy Brown

20:00 Oriental Rugs

20:30 Encounter

21:10 Lost Civilisations (Documentary)

22:00 News in English

22:25 Islam in a Changing World

23:00 Snowy River

23:30 Mini Series — "Memories of Midnight"

01:05 Ramadan Talks

PRAYER TIMES

05:08 Fajr

06:28 (Sunrise) Duha

11:49 Dhuhur

14:44 Asr

17:09 Maghreb

18:29 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sweifeh, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church

Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church

Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church

Tel. 661737

Terra Sancta Church

Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church

Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church

Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church

Tel. 771751

Amman International Church

Tel. 625236

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical

Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel.

654932

Church of Nazareth Tel.

675691

The Evangelical Local Church

in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel.

614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Rainfall is expected in all parts of the Kingdom with cold weather conditions continuing to prevail. Skies will be partly

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre...637111

Civil Defence Dept...661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue...630341

Civil Defence Emergency...199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade...617101

Blood Bank...775121

Highway Police...843402

Traffic Police...896390

Public Security Department

630321

Hotel Complaints...605800

Price Complaints...661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints

897467

Amman Municipality Complaints

787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)...121

Overseas Calls...010230

Central Amman Telephone

Reparis...623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs

661101

Jordan Television...773111

Radio Jordan...774111

Water Authority...680100

Jordan Electricity Authority

815615

Electric Power Company

636381

RJ Flight Information

0853200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussien Medical Centre

813813/32

Khalidi Maternity...644281/6

Ajdleh Maternity...642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity

642362

Malhas, J. Amman...636140

Palestine, Shmeisani...607071

Shmeisani Hospital...669131

University Hospital...845845

Al-Masheer Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali...664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/26

Al-Bashir...775111/26

Army, Marita...891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital

602240/50

Amal Hospital...674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery...865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital

(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital

(09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital

(02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital

(02)272275

QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:15 Sanaa (RJ)

07:25 Damascus (RJ)

09:25 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:05 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:05 Beirut (RJ)

10:15 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

11:30 Jeddah, Aqaba (add) (RJ)

12:15 Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

16:20 Cairo (RJ)

17:15 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

17:20 London, Frankfurt (RJ)

18:45 Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

20:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

02:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

07:30 London (KJ)

Princess returns from UAE

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Basma Monday concluded a short visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) where she met with the General Women's Federation and the Thabian Women's Society President Sheikhah Fatima Bint Mubarak.

Princess Basma and Sheikhah Fatima reviewed the current status of women in Jordan and the UAE, their achievements and common future aspirations.

They also discussed means of cooperation in the field of voluntary social work and expert exchanges. Princess Basma stressed the need for plans to develop the role and status of Arab women to better serve their countries.

She also briefed Sheikhah Fatima on the duties and activities of Jordanian social foundations, particularly during Ramadan, and the charity campaigns organised by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development to improve the living conditions of indigent Jordanian families.

Tabloid editor detained on slander charges

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A weekly tabloid editor, who was detained on Thursday on charges of slandering a Jordanian deputy and a minister, was released on bail Sunday, according to his attorney, Habis Shboul.

Amman Prosecutor Jamal Zoughby ordered the arrest of Editor-in-Chief of the satirical weekly "Abed Rabbo" Omar Nadi after complaints were filed by Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Hadi Majali and Islamist Deputy Ibrahim Zeid Kilani.

"The Appellate Court accepted the second request to free my client, stating that his release is neither a threat to national unity nor does it interfere with the course of investigations," Mr. Shboul said.

Charges pressed against Mr. Nadi include: overlooking objectivity, honesty and accuracy; reporting and publishing inaccurate news; and slandering and tarnishing another person's image and dignity.

The minister and deputy filed complaints against Mr. Nadi following the last two issues of the newspaper which described Deputy Kilani as a hypocrite and accused Mr. Majali of stealing cars, the prosecution said.

According to Mr. Shboul, Mr. Nadi, who was released on a JD 400 bail, is expected to appear at the Amman Court of First Instance in the next few weeks following the conclusion of investigations.

In other developments in the case, officials Monday said they were looking for Editor-in-Chief of "Abed Rabbo" Yousef Gheishan for questioning.

"Mr. Gheishan's name came up when we questioned Mr. Nadi and we would like to ask him few questions," Prosecutor Zoughby said.

But, according to Mr. Gheishan, who spoke to the Jordan Times on Sunday, the authorities are looking to arrest him.

"I think that I am wanted on the same charges although I am not in charge of what was printed in the newspaper," Mr. Gheishan said.

In a related development the Jordan Press Association (JPA) Council Monday issued a statement expressing its dismay over some weekly tabloid newspapers which, the union said, are "tarnishing our culture, values and traditions." (see text inset)

"These newspapers are abusing press freedoms in a scandalous manner," the statement said.

The union threatened tough sanctions against journalists who do not abide by press ethics, stressing that violators will be referred to the JPA disciplinary council which could result in their permanent expulsion from the union.

During a parliamentary session last week, several deputies expressed dismay over articles appearing in tabloid newspapers, describing them as indecent and unethical in their approach.

The deputies argued that some of these tabloids were publishing details of marital affairs and homosexuality, stressing that the House was extremely offended by such publications.

In response to deputy complaints, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said the government would take action to terminate "indecent, obscene and unacceptable" articles in local publications.

Police chief meets with PNA delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Public Security Department (PSD) Police Chief Lieutenant General Nasouh Moheiddin Monday met with a Palestinian National Authority (PNA) police delegation which is currently on a three-day visit to the Kingdom.

The Palestinian team, headed by Palestinian Police Chief Major General Ghazi Jabali, the first to the Kingdom, has arrived for exposure to the Jordanian police experience, the Jordan News Agency, Petra said.

The delegation will also hold talks with other Jordanian PSD officials concerning cooperation and the development of their departments.

Lieut. Gen. Moheiddin told the visiting delegation that Jordan will provide support for the PNA to enable them to fulfil their objectives.

The Jordanian police chief stated that the police force in Jordan has accomplished several advancements in terms of developing its own facilities and using scientific equipment.

"Jordanian police are adapted to new technology and now are a very developed police apparatus," Lieut. Gen. Moheiddin said.

The head of the Palestinian delegation, Maj. Gen. Jabali expressed his appreciation to the Jordanian police.

The visiting delegation was then briefed on PSD duties as well as crime and car accidents in Jordan.

The delegation toured several PSD sections and the anti-narcotics department where they were briefed as to the duties therein.

Muslim Brotherhood reaffirms anti-government stance

AMMAN (J.T.) — An overwhelming majority of the Muslim Brotherhood last Wednesday reaffirmed their resolve not to participate in Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's government, leaving the final decision to the group's consultative council for endorsement, Al Majd Arabic weekly announced Monday.

This decision was taken at the conclusion of a one-day conference, dedicated to a discussion of the group's position regarding government participation. The meeting was attended by 200 leading figures of the Muslim Brotherhood and the outcome led to arguments among the group's major wings, Al Majd said.

The weekly attested that participants engaged in a heated debate and were divided on whether the group should or should not participate in the government.

Three prominent leaders Ishaq Farhan, Bassam Umouh and Hamzeh Mansour withdrew from the meeting to protest what they termed a "campaign of libel" and accused other leaders of a lack of "brotherly dialogue."

However, Dr. Abdullah Akailah resolved to stay and participate in the dialogue, presenting a report encouraging group participation in the government.

He faulted the Muslim Brotherhood group for lacking a proper strategy to help implement its programmes.

Deputy Hammam Said, however, presented a report in which he cited legal, judicial and political reasons for his group not to participate in Mr. Kabariti's government, nor any other government which normalises relations with the "Jewish enemy."

The Jordan Press Association (JPA) Council Monday issued a statement expressing dismay over weekly tabloids which, it said, abuse press freedoms.

This is the text of the statement as quoted by Jordan News Agency, Petra:

In spite of the respect we hold for the pioneering role of some weekly tabloids, which benefit from press freedoms in line with the Jordanian constitution and laws, there are some tabloids which have abused this freedom in a scandalous manner paying no attention to the press code of honour, approved by the JPA Council in April of last year.

That which causes us fear is the

possibility that such violations might lead to the adoption of new regulations and legislation by the government which, in turn, might restrict such freedoms in the Kingdom which we consider as sacred and democratic gains.

We are sure that laws limiting press freedoms will not be restricted merely to weekly tabloids, but rather they will be extended to all the press, thereby granting the executive authority the right to control, supervise, close down the newspapers in question or withdraw their licences or any other action considered a setback.

We hereby ask our colleagues and chief editors not to tarnish our culture, values and tradition.

Those who do not abide by press

ethics and morals in terminating indecent, obscene and unacceptable articles will be referred to the JPA disciplinary council and perhaps permanently expelled from the association.

We call on our colleagues, editors and publishers to consider this a personal appeal to free themselves from anything which is incompatible with the ethics of journalism and its sacred message.

We call on the Parliament and government to allocate time for reorganisation.

We caution against any amendment to the Press and Publications Law, stressing that any amendment should be within the context of safeguarding national press gains.

Jordan export corporation to intensify promotional activities

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) will forge ahead with efforts to improve the quality of Jordanian exports and intensify promotional activities for products through a comprehensive programme JEDCO prepared this year.

While benefiting from past experiences in promoting Jordanian products in traditional markets, the JEDCO programme will also seek non-traditional markets.

It will also participate in specialised international fairs and in organising exhibitions for Jordanian products in foreign markets.

The cooperation also prepared for a July conference regarding the Euro-Mediterranean partnership (Medpartenariat) with the aim of enhancing economic

cooperation between countries of the Mediterranean region and the European Union (EU).

The conference, which will be organised by JEDCO in cooperation with the delegation of the European Commission in Jordan, will bring together representatives from about 150 Jordanian companies and 300 European companies.

JEDCO Director General Mohammad Halaifa told a press conference last month that the meeting will be geared towards setting up joint Jordanian-European ventures and creating a suitable environment for growth of small and medium-size enterprises.

He added that the conference will highlight investment and export opportunities in Jordan as well as incentives brought about by new economic legislation

What's Going On

CONCERT

* Performance by artists from Ajloun governorate at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Ramdaniat exhibition from Wadi Dana Nature Reserve (silver nature jewelry, jams, dried fruits) and Jordan River Designs (JRD) ornaments (tablecloths, candles, embroidered accessories) at JRD showroom, Jabal Amman, Friday

Circle (Tel. 613081), until Feb. 10.
* Exhibition on the "Institute of the Arab World in Paris" at the French Cultural Centre, until Feb. 6.
* Paintings by Muhammad Ali Shaker at the Orient Gallery, Issam Ajlouni Street, Shmeisani, until Jan. 30.
* Photographic exhibition on the life of the Founder of Pakistan at Qaid-e-Azam Hall, Embassy of Pakistan, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 622787, 624680), until January 31.
* Works by Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Jan. 30.

Russia confirms its initiative

(Continued from page 1)

Syria to the negotiation table.

The Russian initiative "had been planned some time ago," he said.

The JEDCO programme is also geared towards participation in international trade fairs in Dubai, Cairo, Damascus, Bosnia, Baghdad, South Africa and United Arab Emirates.

and the multilateral tracks."

Saying that the participants in the peace process expressed their "eagerness to see an increased Russian role" in the multilateral phase of the peace negotiations, Mr. Salzman also declared that Russia is in a privileged position to mediate among all parties, as it enjoys "good relations with all parties directly involved, both the Arab states and Israel."

Israelis raze more homes

(Continued from page 1)

today, the alternative site is much better," he told.

"We are hoping that the remaining 15 families will move by themselves," he said, although he added that police would continue the forced relocations if necessary.

The Jahalin were offered land near Abu Dis, but leaders of the tribe rejected the offer, saying the rocky site is too close to the city garbage dump.

Lt. Lerner said the tribe's belongings would be

moved to the site, which has been supplied with water and electricity.

Linda Breyer, who represented the bedouin in their court battle, said the tribe's living conditions at the new site would be "abominable."

"We are now going to see a real tiny shanty slum," she said.

The Jahalin, who number about 2,000 in the Maale Adumim area, are among tens of thousands of bedouin living in Israeli-controlled areas.

Arafat due here today

(Continued from page 1)

minister in the PNA.

He said Mr. Arafat would leave on Feb. 21, but did not specify how long the trip would last.

The tour will also take Mr. Arafat to Houston and Los Angeles at the invitations of former Secretary of State James Baker and Edward Djerejian, a veteran diplomat who once served as ambassador to Israel, Mr. Shaath said.

"This visit is very important after the Hebron agreement, in which the United States played an active role," Mr. Shaath said.

Mr. Clinton announced

during the final stages of the Hebron negotiations that he had invited both Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu to Washington, but no dates for the visits were set.

Israel Radio has reported that Mr. Netanyahu would travel to Washington in about two weeks, but this has not been officially confirmed.

Mr. Shaath announced Mr. Arafat's travel plans after signing an agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development providing \$3 million in assistance to the Palestinian Justice Ministry.

Arafat holds back declaring state

(Continued from page 1)

not bound to anything in it.

Last week, Mr. Netanyahu said he had a contingency plan should Mr. Arafat declare statehood unilaterally. Israeli media reports said that in such a case, Israel apparently planned to reoccupy West Bank rural areas, leaving Mr. Arafat only with control over seven West Bank cities.

Mr. Arafat, speaking to retired Israeli army generals at his Gaza city headquarters Sunday, said he would not move unilaterally.

Preparing for the final status talks, Likud Knesset faction chief Michael Eitan and labour's Yossi Beilin had been meeting for 13 weeks to try and reach agreement on basic positions.

On Sunday, the two presented their joint document.

"The Likud has given up the dream of an undivided land of Israel, while we in Labour have given up the dream of rolling back the settlements," Mr. Beilin said.

About 145,000 Israelis live on settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The document, which is expected to get the support of the vast majority of labour members and a substantial number of Likud members, was submitted to Mr. Netanyahu and President Ezer Weizman. Several members of the committee that negotiated it.

Mr. Beilin and Mr. Eitan said a national consensus would help Israel get the best deal in the final status talks.

The parties agreed that Israel should annex settlements close to the pre-1967 border with the West Bank so that most settlers can stay in their homes, under Israeli sovereignty, on land that is not disconnected from the rest of Israel. Outlying settlements would not be annexed, but residents would be Israeli citizens with "special agreed upon arrangements."

The document allows the Palestinian entity a strong

police, but no army. It also denies it the right to ally with countries threatening Israel.

On the Palestinian demand for an independent state, Labour — which accepts the idea — and Likud could not fully agree. Therefore, "enlarged autonomy" and statehood are mentioned as valid "options" on what to call the Palestinian entity.

It rejects the Palestinians' demand that Arab East Jerusalem become their capital. Palestinians living in the city would be allowed far-reaching municipal autonomy, with special arrangements made for controlling the city's Muslim and Christian holy sites.

An Arafat aide meanwhile blasted Israeli plans to tighten its grip on Arab East Jerusalem, accusing the Jewish state of trying to preempt negotiations on the fate of the Holy City.

Israel's ministerial committee on Jerusalem, headed by Mr. Netanyahu, decided on Sunday to allocate \$39 million to improve infrastructure in East Jerusalem in a move it said was to strengthen Israeli sovereignty there.

Levy to head talks

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy will head Israel's negotiating team with the Palestinians, taking over from former army Chief of Staff Dan Shomron who resigned, Israeli public radio said Monday.

Mr. Netanyahu selected Mr. Levy to replace General Shomron who recently quit "for personal reasons."

He has also asked lawyer Yitzhak Molkho to continue his role in the talks on the final status of the Palestinian territories scheduled to begin in March and to end by May 1999. Mr. Netanyahu assigned Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to conduct negotiations on security matters with Syria if the talks resume, the radio added.

Is home alleged Saudi smuggle

Kuwait has been accused of being a home for Saudi smugglers, according to a report by the United Nations. The report says that Saudi smugglers are using Kuwait as a base to smuggle oil and other goods into Iraq.

AMMAN

AMMAN — The idea to showcase natural treasures and heritage in a national museum struck a group of "Jordan enthusiasts," as Sharifa Hind Nasser, head of the museum planning committee told the Jordan Times.

The primary reaction upon introduction to this idea was astonishment, she affirmed. "A national museum? Why yes, we need one," she cited acquaintances as saying.

After years of dreaming, that vision is finally becoming a reality, in the form of a conceptual plan drafted by visiting American museumologists James Simms and Patrick Rogan.

Mr. Simms, a museumologist and professor at George Washington University, showcased blueprints and sketches of the future museum to eager committee members and other participants last Saturday.

"Jordan has the opportunity to create something new, based on modern museumology," Mr. Simms said.

Though the museum is still in its conceptual phase, a site has been allocated in the heart of downtown

Amman, according to Sharifa Hind.

"Downtown has such energy, I cannot think of any other place where our museum belongs," she said.

The committee members believe the museum will be of "infinite value in teaching Jordan's children their history, humanity, and help instill national pride."

The draft plan visualises two stories surrounded by a public park, with a section of the ground level reserved for school and tour buses.

The museum will be located between the new municipality building and the downtown shopping area, in close proximity to the Roman Amphitheatre.

"This will definitely upgrade the area and downtown businesses will benefit on a socio-economic level," Sharifa Hind asserted.

"This vision is a Jordanian vision, we simply helped the committee to articulate it," Mr. Simms stated as he laid out the blueprints.

The museum boasts an auditorium, with a capacity of 800 persons, courtyards for demonstrations and performances and a modern approach to showcasing the exhibits, he said.

One aspect which might appeal to museum visitors

would be the audio-visual excursion through Jordanian history in a real Hijaz train car.

However, the discovery courtyard will be the "big wow" of the museum, according to Mr. Simms.

Placed in the centre of the museum, it appears to be the site of an archaeological dig uncovering ancient artefacts.

"As in a dream vision, you might be peering at the artefacts and suddenly stumble upon a reconstructed Nabatean house," Mr. Simms said.

Exhibit plans include a chronicle of the Hashemite family, geographical and natural history, a clothing display through the ages, food, tools, shelter and family life, as well as rotating exhibits.

While the project is still in its preliminary stage and the land procured, the actual construction depends on a loan from a Japanese group.

"We do not know who will sign [for the estimated \$20 million loan] yet, but since the municipality has offered the land we are hoping Mayor [Mamdouh] Abadi will, and without him we would not have come this far," said Sharifa Hind.

"This museum is essential

Compromise on the table as N. Ireland talks resume

RELEASE: A meeting between the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and British officials in London on Monday suggested a compromise on the table as talks resumed.

The IRA's political wing, Sinn Féin, said it was prepared to accept a ceasefire and a new political framework for Northern Ireland.

The British government, in turn, offered a series of concessions, including a new electoral system and a commitment to a new political process.

poll

ge over the election is the outcome of the poll. The poll was conducted by the Electoral Commission and the results were announced on Monday.

Ms. Bhurara, a member of the opposition, said she was disappointed with the results. She said she would continue to work for the people of the constituency.

and there was a lot of talk about the results. The results were announced on Monday.

ises marks

ve were to mark the anniversary of the event. The event was held in the city of London.

President Clinton said he was proud of the results. He said he would continue to work for the people of the country.

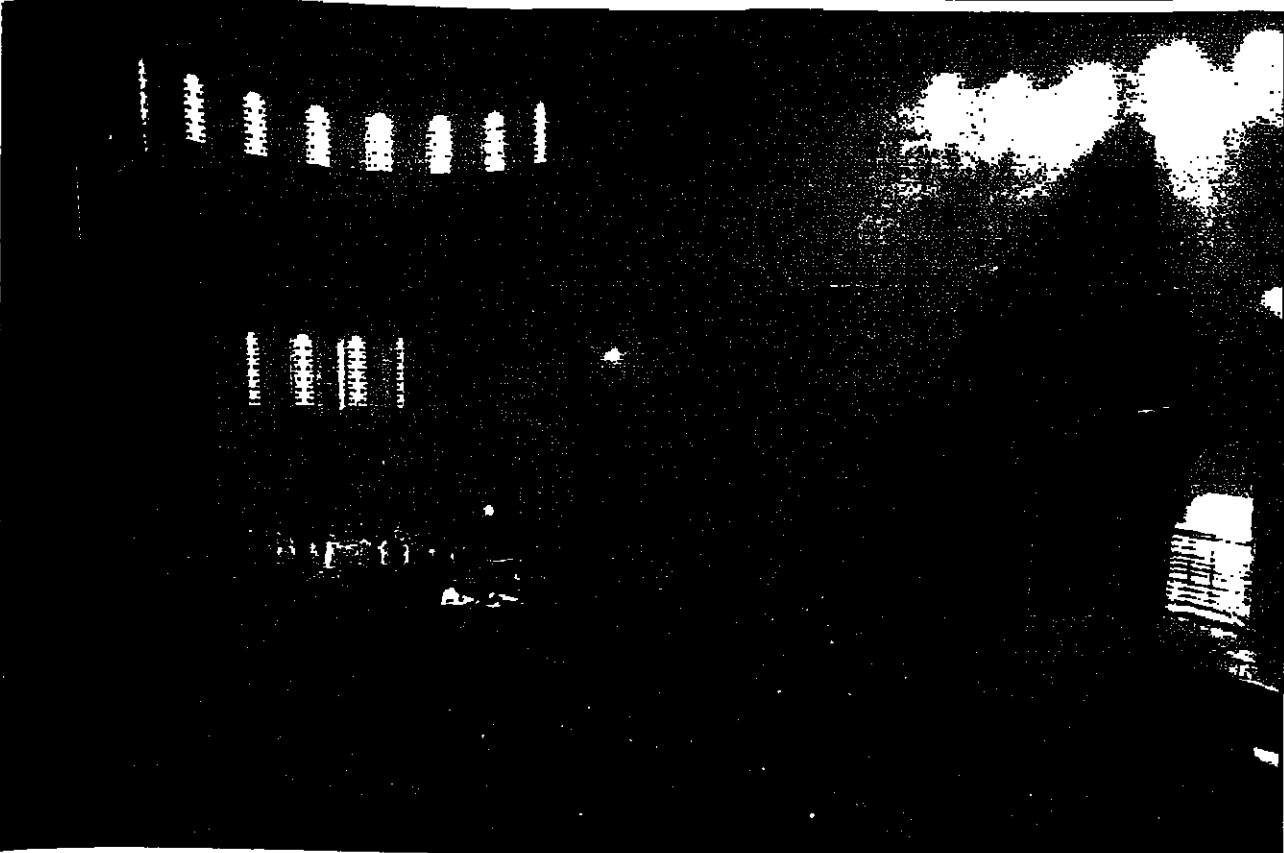
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People attend a mass in St. Sava Temple in the centre of the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade, Sunday. More than 300,000 people marched through city to the Temple of St. Sava, patron saint of education, on whose holy day the ceremony was held. The march was called by the powerful Serbian Orthodox Church, which is now siding with the demonstrators in their protests against election fraud (Reuters photo)

Hundreds of thousands join church march in Serbia

BELGRADE (R) — More than 300,000 people filed solemnly through central Belgrade Monday in a march called by the powerful Serbian Orthodox Church, which is now siding with demonstrators in their protests against election fraud.

Witnesses said the march was the biggest since half a million people turned out on Orthodox New Year's Eve two weeks ago and showed support still ran strong for the pro-democracy movement after more than two months of protests.

Earlier, police withdrew a cordon blocking student pro-democracy demonstrators who had held a non-stop rally for eight days in a test of will with the authorities.

Patriarch Pavle, who is in his 80s, led the church procession flanked by about 20 priests chanting Orthodox hymns and carrying a banner of Saint Sava, patron saint of education, on whose holy day the march was held.

The witnesses said the march, which swelled rapidly in size, began at 7:30 a.m. (0630 GMT) at the Serbian Orthodox cathedral and made its way quietly through sunny, early morning streets to the Saint Sava Temple about 3 kilometres away.

Patriarch Pavle and the other priests celebrated mass for a crowd that continued to grow, jamming the church and the streets outside.

Police, who have clubbed demonstrators in recent days as the protests have dragged into a 10th week, kept their distance.

The Orthodox Church, which backed Serbian nationalist war aims during the Yugoslav conflict, stayed silent for weeks while pro-democracy protests swept Serbia. But Patriarch Pavle blessed student protesters at a rally last week and said he would lead his flock in the Saint Sava Day procession.

Once police had withdrawn their cordon during the night some 50,000 students and supporters swept triumphantly through the city in a boisterous, whistle-blowing march.

"This is our great victory... I feel glorious and victorious," said student Djordjevic Todorovic.

There were shouts of "let's go for a walk" and "let's go to Dedine" — a reference to the Belgrade neighbourhood where President Slobodan Milosevic lives, as the students marched.

At the head of one column, marchers carried two Serbian flags, a statue of Jesus Christ and a candle.

The students later linked up with the church procession and student organisers served as orderlies for crowd control while traffic policemen looked on.

The church's involvement stepped up the pressure on Mr. Milosevic to acknowledge victories by the opposition Zajedno (Together) Coalition in municipal elections last November.

The opposition victories in 14 cities, including the capital Belgrade, were annulled by the government, but Mr. Milosevic has been under strong pressure from the West to reinstate them.

The peaceful atmosphere of both marches Monday was in

contrast to clashes that have erupted in recent days as tensions flared after 10 weeks of protests.

On Sunday, riot police charged protesters in central Belgrade. The demonstrators ran from the police cordon and no major violence was reported.

The opposition also planned a march later Monday to include a tour of the city's churches.

Since Thursday the Socialists had loosened the leash on riot police weary by round-the-clock duty in the winter cold.

The police pummelled protesters, including women and children, blocking roads in several cities. Seven people were injured.

Opposition leaders told a rally Sunday police beatings would fail to defuse popular discontent against Mr. Milosevic's authoritarian rule.

Meanwhile opposition officials took over at city hall in Nis Monday in a transfer of power ceremony largely boycotted by the Socialist Party of Serbian President Milosevic.

The inaugural session of the new city council was formally opened by the sole Socialist Party (SPS) member present, Bozidar Bozovic, who apologised for the absence of the outgoing Nis mayor.

Democratic Party leader Zoran Djindjic, an opposition leader, told the new council: "You now have a heavy responsibility on your shoulders. You must create a model of democratic power and fight against corruption."

Nis is in the south, is the country's second largest city with some 300,000 inhabitants, and its fate in Serbia's political crisis has been the subject of a dizzying array of rulings and counter-rulings since the Nov. 17 local elections.

The local electoral commission first said the Socialists, who are former Communists, won in Nis. It then reversed itself and said the opposition won. The Socialists then appealed, but on Jan. 17 a court upheld the opposition victory.

Nis is among 14 towns and cities where the opposition won but the government initially annulled the results. Under pressure from the international community and facing more than two months of street protests at home, the regime has now acknowledged defeat in five of the 14 but refused to relinquish the top prize, the city assembly in Belgrade.

Nis, formerly considered an SPS stronghold, had been under the uninterrupted control of the ruling Communists, then Socialists, in Belgrade for 50 years.

Mr. Djindjic said: "Your powers are not very extensive, but you must show that this country needs to be decentralised."

The city's Orthodox bishop blessed the new city council, asking it to "return dignity and honour to the people of this city."

Monsignor Irinej said: "Your predecessors left little behind them. No one expects miracles, but the people expect good will and honesty from you."

Jakarta fire destroys hundreds of shops

JAKARTA (AFP) — A fire in central Jakarta Monday destroyed hundreds of shops in a commercial centre and raged unchecked for several hours because emergency exits were padlocked, firefighters said.

The fire in the busy shopping and office district started before dawn, according to police, and smoke was still billowing from the four-storey harco building around midday.

No casualties were reported but police were investigating the blaze. Several witnesses were being questioned, according to Captain Edwart Syah Pernong of Central Jakarta Police.

Security staff said no-one was in the building at the time because the fire started so early in the morning.

The state Antara News Agency reported the fire may have been sparked by a short-circuit on the second floor.

Jakarta Fire Chief Suharto said there may have been a gas leak in a Kentucky

Fried Chicken outlet in the building, the Suara Pembinaan daily reported.

He said his department had problems containing the fire because some emergency exits were padlocked and nearby fire hydrants were not functioning.

Tursandi Alwi, a deputy mayor of central Jakarta, said that if safety conditions were at fault for the delay in containing the fire, the management of the Harco building, Pt Gunung Sewu, must be held responsible.

The complex houses hundreds of stores, mostly textile and shoe outlets, but there is also a branch of the Matarhari Department Store chain and the group's central administrative office.

A fire at a department store in the nearby city of Bogor last March claimed 10 lives, according to officials. Observers and witnesses said the toll was much higher.

Emergency exits at the Bogor Department Store were bolted, delaying firefighters.

Algeria must sort out own problems, France insists

PARIS (AFP) — Violence-ravaged Algeria must sort out its own problems, preferably by democratic means, France said Monday, rebuffing a call for Paris to take an international lead over the unrest there.

Foreign Minister Hervé De Charette reiterated Paris' neutrality over its former colony, where the latest upsurge of a violent civil war has left more than 200 people dead in a few weeks.

"The situation is a very serious one," he said, denying that a body like the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) should become involved.

"But as you know, Algeria is an independent country. And for the moment, we think it is the responsibility of the Algerian people, Algerian leaders to solve their own problems," he said in Copenhagen.

In Paris the French Foreign Ministry said it hoped

upcoming legislative and local elections, due to be held before June, could help calm unrest.

"Like the Algerian people, we hope this process will lead to a genuine national reconciliation, as well as an end to violence," said ministry spokesman Yves Douriaux.

They were responding to a demand by opposition Socialist leader Lionel Jospin for France to get off the fence and do something about the conflict, sparked by the cancellation in 1992 of elections which the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

"France must lift the taboo, it must not remain silent, nor give the impression of unconditional support for the Algerian regime" of President Liamine Zerrouk, he told the daily Liberation.

France has been accused by some fundamentalist militants of backing the Algerian regime. A terror campaign in 1995 killed eight in France, while a Paris bomb blast last month killed four.

Mr. Jospin openly criticised the Algerian regime for some measures — and said other world leaders looked to France, the former colonial power in the North African country, to take the lead.

"No one is doing anything (about it) in Europe because France is not doing anything," he said.

In Copenhagen, Mr. De Charette said the OSCE had no role to play in Algeria. Denmark currently holds the presidency of the pan-European security organisation.

"I don't think that the situation in Algeria is in the field of competence of the OSCE," he said.

His spokesman in Paris echoed the call for Algeria to sort out its own problems. "The Algerian people

have the main responsibility," he said.

"Algeria is a sovereign state, resolving Algeria's problems is for the Algerian people and not for the French," he added.

In Algeria, more than 200 people have been slaughtered since Islamic radicals fighting the Algerian regime vowed to step up attacks during the Muslim Holy Month of Ramadan.

An Islamic leader living in exile in France Monday accused the Algerian regime of being behind the latest massacres.

"The military junta wants by these attacks to create a situation of psychosis among the people to push them to support it," said said Lahlali, speaking as a senior figure in the now-banned FIS.

"At the same time it is seeking to shock international opinion, so that it maintains its support," he said in a statement released in Rennes.

Clashes continue in eastern Zaire

KISANGANI, Zaire (AFP) — Clashes involving artillery and air power are continuing between Zairean government troops and rebel forces along the River

Oso in eastern Zaire, sources said Monday.

On Sunday, several heavily loaded Zairean fighter-bombers took off from Kisangani Airport to the front line, an AFP correspondent said.

Sources on the ground said two 800-strong brigades were fighting on the rebel side against 1,000 government soldiers being supplied from Kisangani.

Medical sources said that about 15 wounded had been treated at Kisangani Hospital over the past two days, but the press has been barred from entering the hospital and a neighbouring clinic.

Fighters have dug in on either side of the river, near a metal bridge that has been made all but impassable by its exposure to gunfire.

This front line has been in place nearly two weeks, since rebels backed by Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers attempted to attack the Amici Camp, which shelters some 40,000 people.

The rebels suspect the refugees include former Rwandan militia who were driven out of their country following the 1994 genocide.

Witnesses reported a stream of weapons and ammunition, notably 120 mm rocket launchers for mounting onto vehicles, arriving at Kisangani Airport.

All the arms are apparently being delivered to the front by air, with no military traffic seen on the road leading to the front, which is located halfway between Kisangani and the eastern border with Rwanda some 500 kilometres away.

Flights have been ongoing since late last week, with civilians denied access to the improvised airport near the Amici Camp.

Gazelle or Puma helicopters — delivered by France before a European arms embargo was imposed in 1994 — are frequently seen flying over Kisangani.

Meanwhile, the Zairean press united to condemn Western reports that Kinshasa was using foreign mercenaries, accusing the West of "hypocrisy" in ignoring the alleged use of Rwandan, Burundian and Ugandan troops by the rebels.

Belgian mercenary Christian Taverniers said that some 280 European soldiers of fortune, equipped with combat helicopters, were preparing to help the Zairean army recapture territory seized by the rebels.

Lebed says Russians will soon see Yeltsin unfit to rule

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian presidential hopeful and former National Security Chief Alexander Lebed said in an interview Monday that people would realise "within two months maximum" that President Boris Yeltsin was no longer capable of fulfilling his duties.

"Within two months maximum this will be perfectly clear to everyone, including the most optimistic," Gen. Lebed told the weekly Novaya Gazeta.

For the past few weeks Gen. Lebed, who came third in the first round of the June-July presidential elections, has been calling for Mr. Yeltsin to resign on health grounds.

Mr. Yeltsin co-opted Gen. Lebed after the first round,

appointing him secretary of the Security Council, but sacked him in October after the abusive, plain-speaking ex-general fell foul of Mr. Yeltsin's team.

Mr. Lebed reiterated his demand that the presidential constitution, pushed through by Mr. Yeltsin in 1993, be revised.

"Russia must be changed from an ultra-presidential republic into a presidential-parliamentary republic," said Gen. Lebed, stressing that even a healthy president could not fulfil all the duties incumbent on him according to the constitution.

Gen. Lebed, the most popular politician in Russia according to recent opinion polls, said his main rival in the next presidential elec-

tions would be Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov.

He dismissed the chances of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who was briefly acting president while Mr. Yeltsin was undergoing heart surgery last November.

"He (Chernomyrdin) is worn-out stuff. He is just being kept on as a scapegoat, so that he can be blamed when the system collapses," Gen. Lebed said.

He vowed that if elected, he would first take steps to revive the economy.

"All the barriers should be lifted to repatriate Russia's national wealth," he said, adding that some \$280 billion had left the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

U.S.-Russia relations are not based on Yeltsin — Albright

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Sunday that U.S. ties with Russia's government are not dependent on ailing President Boris Yeltsin.

She said on NBC's Meet The Press that a planned meeting between President Bill Clinton and Mr. Yeltsin in March in the United States was still expected to take place but no exact time or place has been arranged.

Ms. Albright said the Clinton administration was closely monitoring Mr. Yeltsin's progress.

"So while we really wish Boris Yeltsin well and we have a very good relationship with him, it's important that people understand

that our relationships with Russia are based on where they're going, other people in the government, and the possibility that we will be able to work better and better together," she said.

The new secretary of state said the immediate focus is on a February meeting between Vice President Al Gore and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Mr. Yeltsin is recovering from double pneumonia, which struck him earlier this month just two weeks after he returned to the Kremlin after undergoing heart surgery.

"The Yeltsin-Chernomyrdin government is one that is on the right track, and we are working with them," she said.

Mr. Yeltsin, reelected last July, was out of the Kremlin for most of the second half of 1996 with heart problems, and he had a bypass operation on Nov. 5.

Yeltsin working on papers, no meetings scheduled — Kremlin

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin was working on papers but had no official meetings scheduled for Monday at the state residence where he is convalescing from pneumonia, the Kremlin said.

"The president is working on documents," a spokesman for the Presidential Press Service said.

The spokesman said he had no new details about the 65-year-old president's state of health, one week

after he left hospital following 12 days of treatment for pneumonia.

Mr. Yeltsin, recovering at the Gorky-9 residence outside Moscow, was expected to have several meetings this week but none was scheduled for Monday, said the spokesman.

Russian Television has shown no new footage of Mr. Yeltsin for three weeks, a longer gap even than the 15 days between the heart surgery he underwent on Nov. 5 and

his first television appearance after the operation.

Mr. Yeltsin's political opponents have called for his removal for health reasons, but the Kremlin has dismissed the demands.

Presidential Press Secretary Sergei Yastrzhembsky said Friday Mr. Yeltsin had not yet completed his recovery from pneumonia but was keen to return to full work and did not intend to scrap several planned foreign trips.

Filipino rebels, government sign truce

SULTAN KUDARAT, Philippines (AFP) — Philippine Muslim guerrillas Monday agreed to a ceasefire to end week-long clashes which have killed more than 40 people in a southern town.

The military and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) units involved in the clashes in Buldon will

maintain an "as is, where is" position, enabling Mayor Macarapant Manalao to return to office, said army Major General Joselin Nazareno, who signed the ceasefire document.

The week of fighting claimed the lives of 40 MILF rebels and six soldiers, according to military estimates, but the MILF

said it had killed 90 soldiers and damaged seven armoured personnel carriers of the army.

The clashes began on Jan. 16 when Mr. Manalao was ambushed by rebel units. He was declared mayor in 1995 but was prevented from assuming his post by warring political factions and threats from the rebels.

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Unfinished business

PARLIAMENT ENDORSEMENT Sunday of the one-person, one-vote formula should not bar the rectification of other features of the existing Election Law. The formula as such is a positive one. But we cannot adopt one positive element for conducting national elections and disregard other complementary corrections without which the one-person, one-vote system would remain lacking and incomplete. That's why many people remain unsatisfied with what the Lower House had agreed on on Sunday.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti has conceded during the parliamentary debate on the subject that the country must still aim at articulating a new and modern election law that would address other major issues such as proportional representation and quotas system for women, religious and ethnic minorities. But this admission alone would not diminish the valid criticism that patching up one aspect of the legislation without addressing the other faulty aspects of the law would otherwise turn a good step into one of public concern. Instead of just promising to examine the other remaining dimensions of the law, the government should at least commit itself more effectively to a timetable for finishing the unfinished work. This clearer commitment is rendered all the more pressing and necessary because the parliamentary debate on the issue was both heated and acrimonious even though at the end of the day the adoption of the 1993 temporary legislation was attained by a vote of 51 votes for and 21 against.

The picture that emerged from Sunday's session suggests that the country is sufficiently divided on how best to carry out future parliamentary elections as to warrant more a forceful commitment to legislate into a law "modern election principles" that satisfy the country's quest for a more advanced form of democracy. Since parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in November, there is ample time left to search for a national consensus on the remaining aspects of the law. Perhaps the most important aspect governing the November elections is, as the prime minister noted, the realignment of the electoral constituencies in a way that would give full meaning to the formula of one-person, one-vote. Fortunately this single aspect does not require a formal amendment to the law. According to the law itself the division of the country into constituencies requires only an administrative decision by the government.

Much of the work for the achievement of that goal, therefore, depends on the prime minister. We are hopeful that by summer a new formula will be worked out that would be satisfactory to all political groups in the country.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PARLIAMENT ENDORSEMENT of the election law was the subject of Al Ra'i editorial on Monday. It said that by endorsing the law, following a lengthy debate, parliament has contributed to deepening the democratic practice in the country. The newspaper said that the arguments brought by the opposition, the government and the rest of the deputies are a striking example of a democratic process that, at the end of the day, resorts to voting as a civilised and modern method of ensuring the rule of the majority. It said that the prime minister's emphasis that the right to oppose the law was as sacred as the right to endorse it was a clear indication that the government is committed to upholding the principles of democracy. It noted that the prime minister, while insisting on the central concept of the law — the one-person, one-vote — did however admit that other aspects of the law could be amended to make it a more advanced legislation. The newspaper also noted that articles in the law dealing with the number of constituencies, the quota system, the voting process, can all be still considered when all the political spectrum enters into dialogue over the formulation of a new law.

AL DUSTOUR daily meanwhile commented on the joint document that the Israeli Labour and Likud parties agreed on this week, spelling out their common vision for a final solution to the Palestinian problem. The newspaper said it saw in the document a new hurdle placed in the path of a just and lasting peace. Israel cannot debate the fate of the Palestinian with itself, the paper said. It reminded its readers that the current Middle East peace talks are not based on political consensus in Israel, but rather on the Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, on the principles that govern the Madrid conference, on American letters of assurances and on international legitimacy. It concluded that the Labour-Likud document is of no value since it is only a one-sided view of how the Palestinian-Israeli conflict could be solved.

The View from the Fourth Circle

The millennium dance — celebrating or expropriating history?

By Rami G. Khouri

THE COMMEMORATION of the millennium — the end of 1999 and the start of the year 2000 — has started in many parts of North America and Western Europe (where it assumes a strong ideological/cultural dimension) and to a lesser extent in Israel (where the religious/cultural/tourist angle predominates). Most of the rest of the world appears to be watching or reading about it in those venerable organs of contemporary Western culture — Time, Newsweek and the Economist.

The advent of the millennium, I fear, is already in danger of being taken hostage by a gang of ideological hijackers who wish to claim it as their own, and to use it as a triumphalist celebration of their own heritage and ideology. As we approach what will be the most dramatic moment of modern world history (matched only by the landing of the first human being on the moon), it is both shocking and sad that Arab/Islamic peoples and cultures are so absent from the whole millennial enterprise.

I fear that the West, and perhaps Israel as well, will try to transform the full historical and moral breadth of the last 2000 years into a cheering exercise for the post-Enlightenment legacy of Western-style democracy, seen primarily through a lens of Judeo-Christian traditions. An early and influential indication of this approach to the millennium is a small book entitled "On the Eve of the Millennium," published recently by the distinguished Irish statesman and writer Conor Cruise O'Brien, in which he offers an intriguing mix of sparkling wisdom and frightening ignorance.

On the wisdom front, he makes some important points: the most interesting, in my view, was that Western democracy may be threatened by an "inherent weakness: the tendency to produce... leaders who are specialists in winning popularity contests... Democracy is turning into a series of plebiscites, over which the spin doctor is king... There is a tragic paradox here in that the forms which freedom of expression is taking in the late twentieth century are beginning to threaten democracy itself: the only tradition that permits freedom of expression."

In the ignorance department, he argues that the making of common cause between official Catholicism and fundamentalist Islam — what he calls the Alliance for the Repeal of the Enlightenment — threatens the future of the Enlightenment, which he understands as "comprehending also, within itself, the future of democracy, freedom of expression, and the rule of law."

The rule of law, he reminds us, "is anterior to the Enlightenment... Magna Carta dates from the thirteenth century, not the eighteenth." He adds that "the rule of Islamic law — the Shari'a — operates, wherever and however it is enforced, to the exclusion of practices based on Enlightenment values" and, he also adds, "Islamic fundamentalists... are also addicted to what the decadent West describes as terrorism."

I mention these points of Mr O'Brien primarily to show the dangers that we will face as we get closer to the new millennium. If an always distinguished and often erudite man such as Conor Cruise O'Brien gets the discussion

going with such a confused Euro-centric combination of intellectual triumphalism, cultural arrogance, historical selectivity and religious nonsense, what will we have to put up with when less enlightened people join the discussion?

My criticism of millennial perspectives such as Mr O'Brien's is that they are fundamentally colonial in a retrospective way. They reflect the belief that the Enlightenment in Europe was the defining moment of modern history and the intellectual and ideological pivot, around which we should assess the past, celebrate the present and chart our passage into the future. I am a great fan of the Enlightenment, but I am not so blinded by its glamour that I lose sight of the approximately 4,500 years of history in the wider Mediterranean basin (especially in the Middle East) that fed into, gave birth to, and culminated in the European Enlightenment and other associated splendours.

"If there is a single, overarching theme to the entire sweep of the last 2,000 years, it is neither Enlightenment values nor even Magna Carta legacies; rather, it is the wider, older and more enduring tradition of trans-Mediterranean cultural interaction that has bound Europe and the Middle East together in a symbiotic relationship that has enriched both."

If there is a single, overarching theme to the entire sweep of the last 2,000 years, it is neither Enlightenment values nor even Magna Carta legacies; rather, it is the wider, older and more enduring tradition of trans-Mediterranean cultural interaction that has bound Europe and the Middle East together in a symbiotic relationship that has enriched both. The ancient Middle East, the Greco-Roman world and modern Europe are bound together by principles of participatory or representative governance, personal rights and the rule of law that are most impressive precisely because they are so old and have travelled such a long journey amongst the cultures of this ancient Mediterranean basin.

Many books have been written about the contributions of ancient Oriental (Levantine, Mesopotamian, Egyptian) values to the classical world, and subsequently of the classical world's role in preserving and expanding the classical heritage and transmitting it to Europe to spark the Renaissance and the Enlightenment.

The central emphasis that Islam has always placed on the concept of justice, for example, in both personal morality and the quality of public governance, should be a strong link in the chain of values across the millennial sweep. It is reflected also in the following famous Sasanian saying from pre-Islamic times, known as the "circle of power" and which was repeatedly mentioned by mediaeval Arab and Muslim thinkers: "There is no kingdom without an army, no army without wealth, no wealth without material prosperity, and no material prosperity without justice."

The "circle of power" can be seen as a historical preface to what Conor Cruise O'Brien writes today: "In Western societies, where the laws themselves have been shaped and tempered by centuries of Enlightenment values, the rule of law, associated as it is in these societies with democracy, freedom of expression, and market freedom, is inseparable from the general heritage of the Enlightenment."

Markets, material progress and the rule of law, it seems, have been associated with one another for a very long time. The central and repeated emphasis on justice in Middle Eastern Arab/Islamic, Christian and Jewish traditions should prompt us and our colleagues in the West to see the millennium for what it really is: a milestone on a long and old road, characterised by profound moral and cultural relationships among the civilisations to the north, east and south of the Mediterranean Sea.

As Patricia Springborg and other scholars have suggested, modern Western democracies and their classical predecessors owe important conceptual debts to ancient Oriental traditions that must have influenced concepts of kingship, governance and personal rights in the West. A few noteworthy examples are: law and medical schools at Ebla, in modern day Syria, to which women were admitted in the third millennium BC (nearly 3,000 years before we even started this millennial moment); the stress on personal, contractual and legal rights of individuals in the assorted Mesopotamian laws of the second and third millennia BC, including the Hammurabi Code of the early second millennium and the Ur-Nammu Code of 2050 BC; evidence for representative councils in ancient Sumer and Egypt, and a bicameral legislature in Sippur after 1894 BC; and, the first documented use of the word "freedom" in Lagash (southern Iraq today), in a reform document dated around 2350 BC.

This suggests to me that the millennium of the past 2,000 years should be celebrated with the ideological honesty, nationalistic humility and chronological comprehensiveness that it rightly deserves, in view of its vast sweep of peoples and places. The millennium should not be an intellectual freak show for stressed-out Westerners who have overdone on secularism, nationalism, individualism and materialism; rather, it should be a celebration of the universality and cross-cultural interdependence of the human family and its many common values.

The people of the Arab/Islamic world and other parts of the developing South should wake up and engage in this millennial dance and celebrations or once again risk having their history expropriated or obliterated by the West.

Building on tradition means change is not an end in itself

By Dr. Reinhard K. Sprenger

IT IS a well-known fact that the prime function of management is to disturb all the other workers. Naturally, this noble activity is always in the service of such worthy causes as "deployment of strategy," "bringing about change," or "restructuring." Thus change becomes an end in itself; the transition from fixed to flexible structures a sacred mission. Traditional hierarchies are replaced by networking; and knowledge by learning. In short, an overblown reason is anxious to make its case before the court of history. In the dock — the much reviled status quo.

In a climate dominated by the ubiquitous demand for change, fewer and fewer havens of corporate life are spared the cold wind of this new reality. Increasingly subject to an all-pervading scrutiny, the employee is confronted with an ever-growing clamour: "Justify yourself!" Given the context, it is legitimate to consider the possibility of life without management. Work processes would then flow in a natural, self-regulating manner. But would they be better or worse? And how would this be measured? In many ways, management is the very source of the crisis that it attempts to master.

"Lean Management," for example: the very incarnation of an anorexic corporate culture where the entire workforce is fortified on substances designed to curb their appetites. The accepted wisdom here is that a reduction of the workforce is directly proportional to a reduction of the problem, a

proposition which, pursued ad absurdum yields truisms of the calibre: "Once we've shut down the business completely, we'll be left with no costs whatsoever."

"Team Spirit," for example: the siren call of "Teamwork!" is uttered by those whose careers owe little to the cultivation of this talent. Indeed, the horsehouse atmosphere of competition within corporate structures makes it practically obscene to call for trust in the idea of teamwork. In such a competitive climate, the truth is that the only thing that interests me about my colleague is whether or not he fails. Trust and competition are mutually exclusive.

"Entrepreneurship," for example: "Be an entrepreneur!" cry employees whose very success is parasitic upon the inability of their colleagues to get themselves organised; employees who nonetheless demand behavioural changes from people who have lingered 20 years within an enterprise precisely because they are not entrepreneurs. As it is, many already over-regulated companies would fail to cope with the extra administration entrepreneurship would bring.

The lament of those apostles of reengineering, Hammer and Champy, that the failure of their theory be down to an insufficiently radical will to put it into practice is, one may assume, a joke. Should practice be made to suffer for its inability to harmonise with theory? Happily, within the majority of companies there exists an extremely loyal and intelligent will to repair the effects wreaked

by increasingly short-lived management methods. The way in which a species of constructive disobedience, working from below, still conspires to create something sensible from such methods is a minor art in itself. Imagine what would happen if people were to set about actually putting into practice the nonsense crammed into them by the advocates of this fundamental mobilisation!

"Tradition is valid not because it has proved to be right, but because we cannot do without it."

Innovation requires tradition, the future needs the past. Hermann Lübbe has formulated the essential point here: "Tradition is valid not because it has proved to be right, but because we cannot do without it." People remain dependent upon tradition; thus, a certain persistence of the habitual is unavoidable.

Moreover, this is also why the age of ever accelerating change also remains one of compensation. Permanent change is merely the latest instalment, using different means, of the return of the same: a Neo-Taylorism, deployed along horizontal

process chains, and calling itself reengineering. Each call to "Change Yourself!" implies a devaluation of the old. On this ground alone, one cannot demand that someone deviate from what is customary. Just as people cannot be "brought up" to be free, because upbringing always presupposes the withdrawal of freedom, it is impossible to motivate them to do that which should be done of one's own free will. If anything really needs to be changed here, it is to dismantle the constraints that hinder responsibility from being freely assumed.

People learn very slowly, if at all. Beneath the behavioural surface is a bedrock of personal traits, basic attitudes and mental programming, all endowed with enormous inertia.

The desire to change people — management's favourite game — is therefore an unpromising venture. It proceeds according to the absurd motto: "You have to change in order to make things better for me." But people are not trivial machines to be manipulated at the touch of a button. They only change when they want to do so. This does not necessarily exclude any development. The important thing to remember, however, is that relationships function between people as they are, and not as they should be.

Dr. Reinhard K. Sprenger is a corporate consultant and author of the book "Das Prinzip Selbstverantwortung" (The Principle of Individual Responsibility). This article is reprinted from the New World magazine.

LETTERS

Metaphysics, not mathematics

To the Editor:

I WAS pleased to find out from Ramy Tadros' letter "Missed point on lost money" (Jordan Times, Jan. 22, 1997), which came in answer to the article I had written six days before, "The ricochet theory of history," that the Jordan Times is read in Harvard. However, I have to stress that it is not I, but he, who misses the point. I am not talking about an accounting error but suggesting a paradigmatic shift in perception of the Palestine-Israel conflict, less mathematical than metaphysical, a breaking of the shards which I call ricochet.

Oddly enough, some of the most rabid Jewish racists, like American Rabbi Meir Kahane, were personally untouched by the Holocaust, while some who suffered directly and horribly, like Professor Israel Shahak, rescued nearly dead from an extermination camp at 14 years of age by the Allies, has been, since 1967, a tireless champion of Palestinian rights. Another proof of the ricochet theory of history!

I recommend that Mr. Tadros read some of the books I mentioned in my article. Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht quotes a New York rabbi who infuriated his congregation by telling them they had made kitsch of the Holocaust and that, if the six million were to come back to life tomorrow, his wealthy flock would not even invite them home to dinner. She also says it was the propaganda coup of the century that the Jews took the land from the Arabs and then presented themselves to the world as victims. Perhaps this is why Time-Life, which published her brilliant book, "The Fate of the Jews", refused to reprint it despite many requests.

One further note: I was being tongue-in-cheek about the ricocheting bullet alleged to have killed President Kennedy: I don't believe that for a moment. But I am dead serious about the atavistic nature of a folkloric figure who was given to temper tantrums (like that which occasioned the Deluge), ordered the slaughter of whole peoples, including sucking babes, and liked to be carried around the desert in a box. This primitive idea of a deity is of someone I would not even invite home to dinner. Just read the First and Second Books of Samuel if you think I am making this up.

Dr. A. Clare Brandabur,
English Department,
Al Isra University.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Feature

Multim comp

NEW YORK (UNIN) — A multimedia presentation on the first five years of the work of the United Nations Compensation Commission was made to the press Friday by the president of the commission, Ambassador Antonio de Santa Clara, of Portugal. The Commission, produced by the UN, has been shown to members of the Security Council.

The United Nations Compensation Commission and the United Nations Commission on International Law were established by the Security Council Resolution 662 (1991). The mandate of the commission is to administer the fund for the payment of compensation for any direct loss, damage, including environmental damage, and the depletion of natural resources, or injury to foreign governments, nationals and corporations, as a result of Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The fund was to receive up to 10 per cent of Iraqi oil exports to pay for the claims. The compensation commission, a subsidiary body of the Security Council, has three organs: the governing council, six panels of commissioners and the secretariat.

According to the narrative which accompanied the video presentation, the gov-

Survival

By Stuart Wavell

If a prehistoric man from 25,000 years ago were miraculously transported to Copengagen now today, he would be sure of a big surprise. Behind the bars of a Plexiglas cage is a mating pair of Homo sapiens, engaged for a three-week period in the mundane business of eating, sleeping and exercising before the public gaze. (Breeding is confined to after two hours.)

Only one feature of this spectacle might impress our ancient forbear, who for convenience we shall call Arnie the modern man. Arnie, a 35-year-old male human, is a trained acrobat adept at escaping into the trees. In almost every other respect, the pair lack the most elementary skills of survival. They cannot make weapons, they cannot hunt any of the 250 animal species exhibited around them and they cannot create fire with sticks. So much for the lords of creation.

It has now become clear that primitive man achieved many more accomplishments than these and that he existed at a much higher level of sophistication than anyone was willing to admit. Perhaps the most telling refutation of his brutish stereotypes was the revelation at the British Association for the Advancement of Science that he used tools to make his savage beast.

New evi

(LONDON) — Researchers have presented new evidence that the mystic known as black holes do in fact exist. But even the scientists who did the research said this was not conclusive proof.

The new shred of evidence showed the presence of "event horizons", one way membranes surrounding black holes that, once crossed, cut off all contact with the rest of the universe, researchers reported at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS).

Black holes, first posited

World Bank foresees continued high economic growth in East Asia

WASHINGTON (AFP) — East Asia should enjoy high economic growth into the next century but must commit itself to ending poverty and inequality in income distribution, the World Bank has said.

A recent slump in certain countries reflects temporary phenomena and does not point to economic decline, the bank found in its latest regional forecast.

"Some economies are going through adjustments but the underlying growth momentum remains extraordinarily strong," the World Bank said.

The study stressed that contrary to fears in certain quarters that robust East Asian expansion has hurt job growth in the West, "rapid East Asian growth is good for the world."

"When East Asia's exports grow, so do its imports," the study pointed out.

While the region, excluding Japan, accounts for only

eight per cent of global gross domestic product, it takes in 17 per cent of world imports and is expected to account for more than 25 per cent in global imports between now and the end of the decade.

The bank acknowledged that such growth is most beneficial to skilled workers outside the region but insisted that "recent research indicates that on balance rising trade with East Asia helps, not hurts, unskilled workers as well."

The report said growth in the region since 1990 has averaged nine per cent, up from seven per cent in the previous decade.

Concern was recently raised by a fall-off in double digit export growth in China, South Korea, Singapore and Thailand.

In addition, according to the World Bank, current account deficits exceeded eight per cent of gross domestic product in

Malaysia and Thailand. The stock market has fallen 20 per cent in Korea this year and 30 per cent in Thailand.

But the bank determined that the bad news was largely "cyclical," notably as the export slowdown reflected slumping computer chip sales — which it said are now picking up.

Current account deficits were driven by heavy inflows of private capital rather than low domestic savings, according to the bank, adding that most countries had managed to cool down overheated growth.

But the bank cautioned that despite prospects for sustained impressive expansion, East Asia remains a low income region, one where 80 per cent of the population has per capita income of less than \$600 a year.

For that reason, and in the face of "growing concern over income distribution," the bank urged that govern-

ments give priority to rural development, the provision of social services and the inclusion in the economic boom of those at risk of being left behind.

In addition, the bank recommended:

- Increased investment in infrastructure to relieve bottlenecks.
- Reforms to state enterprises and the financial sector.
- Upgrading the quality and productivity of labour.
- The development of mechanisms to manage lifetime health and unemployment risks in the face of rapidly aging populations.
- Making environmental protection a priority.

"The so-called East Asian 'miracle' is not and never has been on automatic pilot," it has been based on continuing policy and institutional change to meet the evolving demands of development."

UAE economy seen as best performing in Gulf

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) economy performed better than those in other Arab Gulf oil producers over the past five years because of higher oil exports and liberal policies, experts have said.

Although the UAE continued to suffer from a budget deficit, its current account and trade balance maintained a large surplus and the gross domestic product (GDP) grew faster than other Gulf economies, they said.

"The UAE has had the best performing economy in the Gulf over the past five years and the medium-term outlook remains quite positive," said Henry Azzam, chief economist at the Saudi National Commercial Bank.

Mr. Azzam, writing in the Abu Dhabi-based monthly magazine, Gulf Business, said the good performance was a result of higher oil exports due to an increase in production, strong growth

in the non-oil sector, and government policies.

"These policies include a liberal exchange and trade system, an outward-oriented economic strategy that stresses private sector initiative within a framework of effective regulation, extensive infrastructure investment by the government and improved confidence in domestic financial institutions," he added.

Mr. Azzam cited UAE and IMF figures as showing the emirates' GDP recorded high growth rates in the past few years, except in 1993, when it declined by 0.9 per cent. But in nominal terms, it grew by 0.4 per cent.

In 1995, the GDP surged by 5.8 per cent in real terms and is projected to jump by an estimated 8.5 per cent this year, said Mr. Azzam, one of the most prominent economists in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The current account, a key indicator of economic per-

formance, remained in a surplus at a time when it continued to reel under deficits in other GCC states.

It stood at around \$3.7 billion in 1995 and is forecast to rise to \$5.8 billion in 1996.

This is mainly due to an increase in oil export earnings to around \$14.6 billion from \$12.1 billion in 1995. The rise is because of a surge in oil prices to \$20 from \$16.64.

"Considering GDP growth, the balance of payment situation, exports and inflation, you can say the UAE's economy remained in a better shape than other Gulf economies in the past few years," Mohammad Al Asumi, director of the economic department at the government-run Emirates Industrial Bank, told AFP.

The UAE currently produces around 2.16 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil under an OPEC-decreed quota compared with 1.5

million bpd before the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It hiked output to make up for the disruption of crude supplies from Kuwait and Iraq during the crisis.

It is the only GCC state to have maintained spending levels despite the persistence of the shortfall and lower earnings in some years.

Expenditure by federal government and each of the country's seven emirates stood at 61.8 billion dirhams (\$16.83 billion) in 1995 and revenues at 53.5 billion dirhams (\$14.57 billion). This created a shortfall of nearly \$2.26 billion, according to official figures.

Mr. Azzam's projections showed spending would increase to 65.4 billion dirhams (\$17.82 billion) in 1996 and revenues to nearly 55.6 billion dirhams (\$15.14 billion), leaving a gap of \$2.68 billion.

Swiss income inequality grows

BERN (AFP) — Switzerland's income inequality has widened over the past ten years, a report published here by a national scientific body said.

A quarter of national income today is held by 10 per cent of the population, while half the country's wealth is in the hands of just five per cent, the study by the Swiss National Fund for Scientific Research said.

"The inequalities are remarkable compared with other countries. Only in France, Ireland, Italy and the United States do the richest 10-15 per cent of the population absorb an equally high level of income," the study said.

A fifth of all Swiss households have no assets or are in

debt, said the study, which estimates that between five and ten per cent of the population lives below the poverty threshold of 1,800 Swiss francs (\$1,500) per month.

The study said that although poverty numbers have not risen in Switzerland over the past few years, the profile of groups worst affected has changed. Previously the sick and unemployed were the biggest victims of poverty. Today men living alone, divorced women and single mothers are among those most affected.

Meanwhile, the independent KOF research institute has forecast that the Swiss economy will post zero growth this year after shrinking in 1996 while the jobless rate will continue to climb.

Swiss gross domestic product fell 0.6 in 1996 while the jobless rate stood at 5.3 per cent at year-end.

Unemployment will rise to 5.8 per cent of the workforce at the end of 1997 and 6.7 per cent at end-1998, the institute forecast.

Inflation should continue at around 1.1 per cent.

The depreciation of the Swiss franc against major currencies will not translate into immediate economic gains, the institute said.

However, a more expansionary budgetary policy should help kickstart the economy, Bernd Schipps, KOF director said.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get an early start at handling your business activities today, since in the days ahead you'll need time for home matters. You should invite outsiders in, however; this will also be good for restoring harmony.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) There may be some reckless driving around you today, so be quite cautious when on the highway. When handling correspondence, later this evening be sure to add a cheerful note and make someone's day.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure you don't do anything foolish today, especially where finances are concerned. Remember the advice of an adviser, later this evening and think over your actions before making decisions concerning business.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't be upset if anything purposefully tries to hurt your feelings. Try to be "thick-skinned" and let any difficulty roll off your back. This is a good day today to make new plans for the days ahead, so seek out constructive advice.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Others may be too busy to listen to your ideas today, so put them in motion yourself and thereby make your life more successful. Avoid any critical individuals later this evening, and renew your plans before presenting them.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A situation which you may think you should have an opinion about arises today, however, it's really none of your business, so stay out of it. Study the basics of new projects later this evening and thereby proceed with full speed.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your intuition may be faulty today, so rely more on thought processes. Try not to be indiscreet in any manner or you'll pay dearly for it. Think more constructively concerning business activities and proceed with full force.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't try to renege on a responsibility today, or you could easily get into a difficult situation. Watch your credit situation carefully. If your mate is being too demanding let him or her know it for their own good.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't be too forceful in some romantic affair today or you could run into troubled waters. Tact is quite important at this time when dealing with business or money matters which need immediate attention.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If a fellow associate acts too emotional today, do get upset. Instead today, be understanding and the situation will improve immeasurably. Stick to personal pursuits later this evening and become quite successful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is not a good day today to take any financial risks, or you could lose a bundle. If you go out with friends later this evening, however, enjoyable pleasures which are fun.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you go out to a restaurant with a close friend later this evening, be sure to make it "Dutch treat" or you could find yourself short of funds. Work on perfecting your talents today, and you can benefit greatly.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	SEK	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.6442	0.6180	1.4241	119.44	1.3436	1593.80	1.8449	5.5390
DE Mark	0.6082	1.0000	0.3742	0.8660	72.65	0.8168	972.84	1.1229	3.3767
GB Sterling	1.6235	2.6075	1.0000	2.3092	193.78	2.1813	2596.54	2.9952	8.9942
CH Franc	0.7022	1.1543	0.4321	1.0000	83.85	0.9431	1122.90	1.2951	3.8974
JP Yen	0.0084	1.3762	0.5152	1.1918	1.0000	1.1244	13.39	154.40	4.6395
CA Dollar	0.7443	1.2257	0.4826	1.0675	1.12	1.0000	1194.00	1.3788	4.1345
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0278	0.3847	0.8990	1341.02	0.8398	1.00	11.53	3.4648
NL Guilder	0.5420	0.8899	0.3333	0.7715	54.67	0.7275	866.10	1.0370	3.8018
FR Franc	0.1805	0.2966	0.1110	0.2640	21.52	0.2423	33.27	39.2700	1.0000

Energy									
Oils	Last	Prev							
Brent	23.15	23.35							
WTI	22.75	23.80							
Bony	23.15	23.35							
Dubai	20.25	20.42							
UL Gas	205.00	207.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4388	0.16424	0.37987	31.8813				
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.44815	0.16761	0.38812	32.3542				
KW Dinar	3.3245	5.46747	2.04792	4.73709	397.298				
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.63399	0.23792	0.53957	46.857				
CY Pound	2.0236	3.3258	1.245	2.8802	241.597				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz)	354.5	355							
Silver (oz)	5.04	5.06							
Platinum (oz)	358.95	360.95							
AL (3 Months)	1840	1841							
CU (3 Months)	2247	2248							
Zinc (3 Months)	1138	1140							
Lead (3 Months)	696	697							
NI (3 Months)	7289	7300							

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Period	1	3	6	9	12				
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Months	Year				
USD	5.36	5.48	5.56	5.68	5.84				
GBP	6.08	6.19	6.37	6.52	6.68				
JPY	0.33	0.26	0.43	0.51	0.59				
DEM	2.94	3.03	2.93	2.94	2.97				
FRF	3.27	3.26	3.25	3.25	3.27				
CHF	1.50	1.53	1.72	1.82	1.85				
ITL	7.31	7.11	6.75	6.56	6.40				

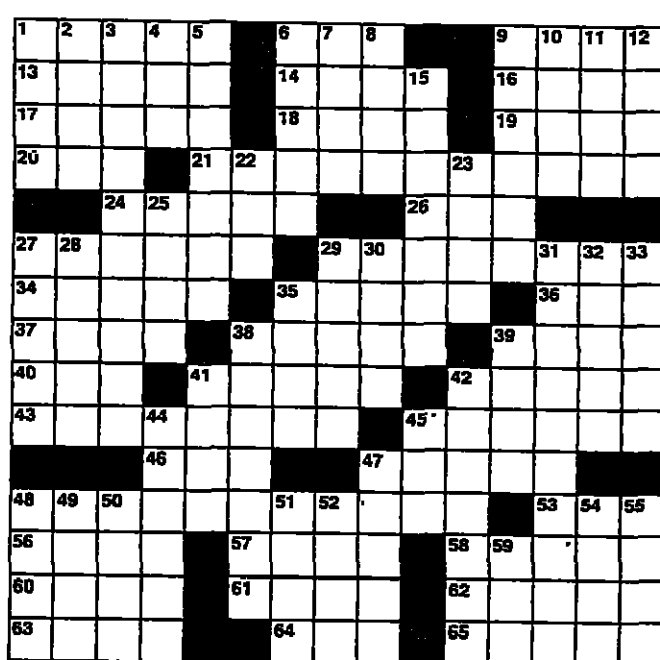
Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chg	% Chg	High	Low	Pr Ch		
New York	DOW JONES	6669.54	-26.94	-0.4	6708.8	6691.15	6696.48		
New York	S&P 500	767.89	-2.53	-0.33	770.75	764.98	770.52		
London	FT-SE 100	4212	-6.8	-0.16	4223.9	4206	4218.8		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	17334.9	-354.46	-2	17664.6	17282.2	17688.4		
Paris	CAC 40	2435.17	4.83	0.2	2445.17	2428.18	2430.34		
Frankfurt	DAX	2894.53	-3.71	-0.12	2906.74	2880.04	2906.24		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (c/lbs)	141	Spot							
Cocoa (c/lbs)	1330	Spot							
Sugar (c/lbs)	299.2	Spot							
Wheat (c/lbs)	133	Spot							
Soy (c/lbs)	22.71	Spot							
Tea (c/lbs)	115	Spot							
Barley (c/lbs)	2.18	Spot							
Rice (c/lbs)	470	Spot							

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	Buy	Sell							
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.028	1.030							
DE Mark	0.4332	0.4364							
CH Franc	0.3018	0.3044							
FR Franc	0.1285	0.1291							
JP Yen	0.5937	0.5957							
NL Guilder	0.3687	0.3676							
IT Lira	0.4449	0.4471							

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1 In error
 - 6 Game board piece
 - 9 Sonny's ex
 - 13 "nice day"
 - 14 Wallet bills
 - 16 Light ring
 - 17 "The" (TV show)
 - 18 Schoolbook
 - 19 Questions
 - 20 Blamish
 - 21 Welding tools
 - 24 Not as damp
 - 26 Cheering word
 - 27 Insertion marks
 - 29 That can be endured
 - 34 Riyadh natives
 - 35 Sudden gush
 - 36 Baseball score
 - 37 Umps' kin
 - 38 Suing
 - 39 Offer for sale
 - 40 Explosive letters
 - 41 Penn and
 - 42 Connery
 - 43 Blockade
 - 44 Facility
 - 45 Stunned
 - 46 Integers: abbr.
 - 47 Swampy spot
 - 48 Light jacket
 - 53 Cooking vessel
 - 56 Singer Adams
 - 57 Fashion magazine
 - 58 Wall Street activity
 - 60 All cooked
 - 61 Appointment
 - 62 Store for later
 - 63 Idler's transport
 - 64 Forget-me—
 - 65 Positive responses



by Diane C. Baldwin

SKIP	CHEAT	DOZE
ALVA	HARSH	AVOW
NEAR	AGATE	WANE
KENNELS	RIDDLER	
ELK	SOREL	
PAOLI	MAN	REBEL
ANGLOSAXON	DEAL	
NIL	TAX	MAX
ITEM	DILIGENTLY	
CARED	MAG	BASED
AFFIX	HEM	
CHANCE	PACIFIC	
HARD	NIVEN	BONO
ERIE	CAIRO	TAGO
WEAR	ENNUI	ALES

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- DOWN
- 1 Impact sound
 - 2 Pro —
 - 3 Banking boobies
 - 4 Teacher's org.
 - 5 Stratagems
 - 6 Type of pool
 - 7 Once more
 - 8 Following
 - 9 Latin dance
 - 10 Mishmash
 - 11 Actress Sommer
 - 12 Betsy or Diana
 - 15 Closet's use
 - 22 "Miserables"
 - 23 Unusual
 - 25 C.S.A. soldiers, for short
 - 27 Menu
 - 28 Bout site
 - 29 Robert or George
 - 30 Units of work
 - 31 Roofed
 - 32 Sudden move
 - 33 Put a stop to
 - 35 Red and Dead
 - 38 Gets angry
 - 39 Serum container
 - 41 Aloof chap
 - 42 In a stylish manner
 - 44 For sure
 - 45 Reverent wonder
 - 47 Trapshooting
 - 48 Espouses
 - 49 Exalted one
 - 50 Inches in a span
 - 51 Verve
 - 52 Glee club voice
 - 54 "Garfield" dog
 - 55 Actors Berry and Howard
 - 59 Charlotte of "Different Strokes"

JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 684311 — 699634

Peanuts



Andy Capp

Higher land prices, construction costs make houses, apartments more expensive in Amman

By Shehab Makahleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prices of housing units and apartments, especially in western Amman, are surging as a result of higher land prices and construction costs which have noticeably risen in 1996 and are expected to continue rising in 1997.

Salem Abdallah, an investor in the housing sector, said construction costs rose by 15 per cent

in 1996 as a result of a rise in prices of lands by about 40 per cent.

Mr. Abdallah pointed out that the implementation of the sales tax has also caused an increase in the prices of apartments.

Ihab Nasser Eddin, a proprietor of a housing establishment, said that organisational laws and regulations, such as limiting the space between buildings, imposed by the Greater Amman Municipality contribute to raising

housing prices in addition to high construction costs, service fees, wages of labourers and customs on building materials.

Mr. Nasser Eddin expected higher building costs and land prices in the coming four years.

Nasser Ghasein, a real estate broker, indicated that land prices surged in 1995 and 1996 due to logical factors brought about by the peace process which consolidated stability and security as well as provided reassurance and optimism to investors in the housing sector.

Salameh Zureiq, another middleman, described the market for apartments in 1996 as good and predicted it would remain so in the future due to the stability prevailing in the region.

Mr. Zureiq expected the fluctuations and uncertainty at the stock exchange to force many investors to move to the real estate market.

Hisham Rashid, general manager of a company dealing in housing projects, said the higher prices were basically the result of land prices going up, in addition to construction fees which until 1993 were not more than JD150 per square metre, compared to JD250-JD300 now.

Mr. Rashid also expected prices to keep on rising, especially under the strict implementation of organisational regulations by the Municipality of Greater Amman.

He criticised the routine procedures at many government institutions and indicated that for a transaction to purchase a plot of land for constructing a building and selling it as apartments need tens of signatures from various government departments.

The contractor pointed out that land prices in western Amman have rocketed to between JD250 and JD300 per square metre since 1992 and that apartments cost between JD33,000 and JD80,000.

Mr. Rashid also criticised the high interest rates charged by banks for extending housing loans and said that imposing such interest as high as 15 per cent discourages people from purchasing apartments.

Foreign purchases of British businesses reach record levels

LONDON (AFP) — Purchases of British businesses by foreign companies reached a record high value of \$38.54 billion in 1996, accountants at KPMG have said.

"The buying spree in the U.K. last year was led by U.S. businesses, spurred on by the race to acquire regional electricity companies," the company said in its annual study of international takeover activity.

KPMG compiled data from 5,500 cross-border mergers and acquisitions around the world, which totalled \$263 billion in 1996.

The study showed that the United States remained as the favoured destination for foreign capital. Overseas companies pumped a record \$68.3 billion into U.S. companies, the study found. This was 10 per cent higher than in 1995.

KPMG said in a statement that the value of foreign takeovers of British companies exceeded the total for all other European Union countries combined.

"International companies evidently believe that the U.K. is the best base for expansion in Europe — and they are not being put off by the prospect of Britain missing the first stage of European monetary union," head of mergers and acquisitions at KPMG, Stephen Barrett, said.

He predicted that British companies would continue to be a much-favoured prey of overseas predators, regardless of any possible changes in government following general elections which must be held here by May 22.

"Regardless of the outcome of the general election — and in spite of the recent strength

Japan's bankruptcy liabilities second highest in 1996

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's corporate bankruptcy liabilities totalled 7.99 trillion yen (\$67.7 billion) in 1996, the second highest figure in the post-war era, Teikoku Databank has said.

The sum was down 11.5 per cent from a record high of 9.33 trillion yen in 1995, the private credit research agency said.

The number of bankruptcies with debts of at least 10 million yen (\$84,750) totalled 14,544 in 1996, down 3.6 per cent from 1995 but still the second highest since 1990 when the "bubble" economy of inflated stock and real estate prices collapsed, it said.

Recession-induced bankruptcies numbered 9,095 cases, accounting 62.5 per cent of the total figure. The ratio topped 60 per cent for the fourth consecutive year.

"Liabilities swelled in 1996 due to bankruptcies of independent non-bank lenders and large real estate companies," Teikoku Databank said in a statement.

Nichiei Finance Co., a money lender based in Yokohama near Tokyo and listed on the second section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange, went under in October with record-high liabilities of one trillion yen.

Sueno Kusan, a realtor based in the western Japan city of Osaka and a major borrower from failed "Jusen" housing loan firms, went bankrupt in November with liabilities of 600 billion yen.

Teikoku Databank said it was not optimistic about the future trend of bankruptcies. "A series of large bankruptcies are expected for non-bank lenders and other companies benefited from the bubble economy," it said.

In December alone, the number of corporate bankruptcies fell 4.0 per cent from a year earlier to 1,259 cases.

Liabilities involved, however, surged 52.0 per cent year-on-year to 655.2 billion yen.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Higher activity expected at Aqaba port this year

**AN INCREASED cruise ship activity and a higher number of tourists coming via Jordan's Red Sea port have raised the number of vessels that docked at Aqaba from 2,382 ships in 1995 to 2,735 boats in 1996, Ports Corporation Director General Mohamed Dalabeeh has said. He noted that the number of tourists has jumped from 19,328 visitors in 1995 to 27,000 in 1996.

Mr. Dalabeeh indicated that the volume of goods handled at Aqaba last year was two per cent higher than in 1995. He said that the port handled a total of 12.2 million tonnes of goods in 1996 compared to 11.76 million tonnes in 1995.

The port chief pointed out that there was a noticeable increase in the volume of containers which reached 75,333 containers in 1996 compared to 55,783 in the previous year. He attributed the rise to Aqaba being chosen by four large freight companies as a trans-shipment port in addition to the reduction of fees during the last quarter of 1996. The reduction in fees, he indicated, has generated an extra one per cent in financial returns in 1996 over the amount that the corporation earned in 1995.

Captain Dalabeeh said the corporation is about to build a special wharf for the passenger boats to support the tourism activity in the Kingdom.

Asked about his expectations for 1997, the port chief predicted higher activity as a result of the oil-for-food deal agreed between the U.N. and Iraq last year. He said that over the coming three months a total of 260,000 tonnes of wheat will be shipped through Aqaba to Iraq and, consequently, large number of ships will be docking at Aqaba.

He added that the port is ready to handle the future activity easily as the current volume of work, currently at 12 million tonnes annually represents only 60 per cent of the maximum capacity that the port can handle.

Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi said recently that Aqaba will "at best benefit of 50 per cent of Iraqi imports" that were permitted by the U.N. He expected the volume of goods passing through Aqaba to Iraq to be about one million tonnes adding: "The activity at the port will certainly be below the levels witnessed in the 1980s when the port used to handle around 20 million tonnes." (Al Ra'i + Al Dostour + Al Aswaq).

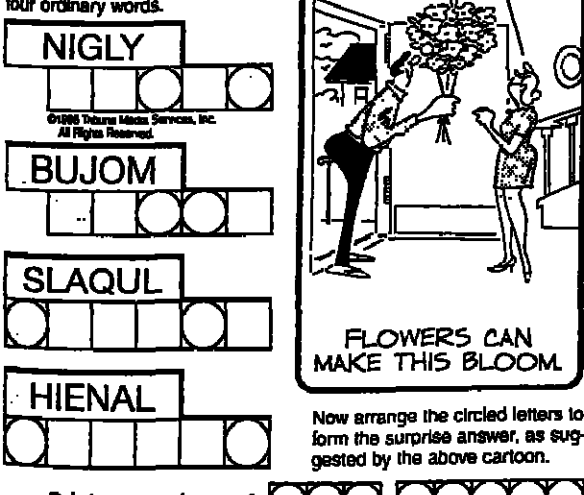
THE BETTER HALF.



"It's not a hearing aid, it's a hearing filter. It only lets you hear good news and compliments."

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: AVAIL CRAFT BRIDGE RARELY Answer: A law observed the world over — GRAVITY

Saudia and United seal aviation accord

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudia, the Saudi Arabian Airlines and United Airlines of the United States have signed an accord to operate jointly flights between Jeddah, New York and Los Angeles.

Under the accord, which was signed in the Red Sea port of Jeddah and will come into force on Feb. 18, each airline will operate seat-sharing arrangements, the Saudi airline's deputy director general, Hani Aref, said.

"A widening of this accord to other destinations figures in our plans for the future to strengthen relations between the two carriers," Mr. Aref

was quoted as saying by the official Saudi news agency SPA.

Saudi Arabian is the biggest Arab airline, with a fleet of 114 aircraft.

Polish and Israeli companies sign \$400m gas stations deal

TEL AVIV (AP) — Dor Energy of Israel has signed a \$400 million deal with Centralia Produktowa, Poland's state-owned oil company, to build 400 gas stations in Poland over the next five years.

The contract calls for Dor Energy and an anonymous foreign partner to invest \$200 million in the first year to repair existing gas stations and begin construction on new ones.

Dor Energy is part of the Dankner Group, which is looking to expand its investments in Poland.

"Poland, in my eyes, is the young tiger of Europe," group chairman Shmuel Dankner told the Jerusalem Post. "We are looking at widening our infrastructure and other interests. There is very great potential there." The gas station contract will expand Dankner's existing partnerships in Poland, which include a major telecommunications contract with the Polish company R.P. Telekom. "The network of gas stations will be modern with state-of-the-art equipment," said Shmuel Dankner.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHORT TERM

TELEPHONE: 571712 501719

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 27/01/1997

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	F / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHG. %
261.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	14.0	1.37	3	160	40880	256.00	255.50	-0.2
3.460	2.900	BANK OF JORDAN	11.7	0.00	1	200	650	3.18	3.25	1.7
1.210	0.880	MID-EAST INV. BK.	76.2	0.00	6	7700	8803	1.16	1.16	0.0
2.700	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.3	6.05	4	900	2076	2.33	2.30	-1.3
2.950	2.440	JOR. KOWAT BANK	19.7	0.00	3	509	1378	2.67	2.72	1.9
1.090	0.880	JOR. GULF BANK	5.7	7.29	3	1250	1390	0.96	0.96	0.0
4.180	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.2	0.00	6	1350	5110	3.81	3.78	-0.3
3.000	1.380	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	P	0.00	1	200	290	1.45	1.45	0.0
BANK SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 194.99 CHG: -0.11										
1.830	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.2	7.45	19	24850	39825	1.63	1.61	-0.2
5.600	4.200	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	18.4	2.76	6	20187	93870	4.60	4.65	1.0
1.620	1.080	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	13	3800	4545	1.20	1.20	0.0
2.250	1.690	UNIFIED CO.	15.1	4.74	12	6900	14501	2.11	2.11	0.0
1.200	0.820	UNION LAND DEV.	E	0.00	1	850	714	0.85	0.84	-0.1
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 112.15 CHG: +0.06										
3.730	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.6	2.92	8	5898	20137	3.40	3.42	0.2
3.500	2.710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	36.0	0.00	6	15400	52350	3.40	3.35	-0.5
8.000	4.950	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.7	3.42	3	1383	5900	5.84	5.86	0.3
10.400	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.1	8.02	9	900	8996	10.01	9.98	-0.3
1.590	1.150	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	57.3	0.00	1	4200	5418	1.23	1.29	4.6
4.580	3.040	ARAB PAPER. MANUF.	19.9	5.51	16	6850	24816	3.65	3.63	-0.2
2.130	1.570	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	8.9	7.50	1	250	400	1.61	1.60	-0.1
7.350	4.250	DAR ALDINA DV. INV.	12.8	4.27	13	2950	13693	4.70	4.68	-0.2
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.8	8.45	1	150	533	3.61	3.55	-0.6
4.450	2.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	7	4400	2686	0.62	0.61	-0.1
1.020	0.540	NATIONAL IND.	9.8	9.09	8	5000	3320	0.67	0.66	-0.1
3.730	2.130	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MFAC	15.0	0.00	2	130	369	2.59	2.46	-1.3
3.150	1.670	JOR. STEEL IND.	15.0	0.00	1	250	205	0.82	0.82	0.0
1.670	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	26.2	0.00	8	2850	4009	1.42	1.40	-0.2
1.590	1.050	KAPHTER INVEST.	37.0	5.83	2	700	708	1.05	1.01	-2.1
3.150	1.640	UNIV. MOON. IND.	5.1	11.90	6	1650	2785	1.71	1.68	-1.3
1.930	1.140	JOR. TDS. RESOURCES	16.3	0.00	7	2250	2925	1.32	1.30	-0.2
1.360	0.840	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	25.0	0.00	18	14500	13353	0.93	0.92	-0.1
2.460	1.750	EL. WY. READY WEAR	P	0.00	4	8600	18920	1.90	1.95	2.6
1.380	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	29.6	0.00	13	48300	60117	1.26	1.26	0.0
1.540	0.930	UNION CH. & VEG.	24.6	0.00	6	2850	2850	1.03	1.00	-0.3
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 116.31 CHG: -0.67										
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 153.54 CHG: -0.32										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 27/01/1997										
0.800	0.500	JOR. TRADE FAC.	14.1	0.00	3	2500	1325	0.54	0.53	-1.1
0.890	0.700	UNION INV. SOA	68.9	0.00	2	5500	1210	0.72	0.72	0.0
0.950	0.370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	6	10400	4576	0.45	0.45	0.0
0.640	0.300	JOR. LIDS. MATCH-JEMCO	9	0.00	17	18250	5175	0.30	0.28	-1.1
0.800	0.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	2	0.00	2	2000	1240	0.62	0.62	0.0
1.590	1.300	NATL. CHLORINE	2	0.00	2	750	1030	1.37	1.38	0.7
0.860	0.520	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	5	2500	1350	0.54	0.54	0.0
0.920	0.400	NATL. MOLT. ENG. HAMICO	0	0.00	19	13786	6754	0.49	0.49	0.0
0.740	0.430	NATL. DIES & Moulds	2	0.00	6	4600	2487	0.56	0.56	0.0
0.720	0.390	JORDAN STEEL	2	0.00	2	950	722	0.76	0.76	0.0
0.760	0.420	MIDEAST PHARM. 757	2	0.00	1	500	190	0.63	0.63	0.0
1.330	1.020	UNION TOBACCO 757	2	0.00	5	5000	3900	1.04	1.03	-0.1
0.710	0.370	RAL. PHARM. 657	2	0.00	2	1400	236	0.61	0.61	0.0
0.760	0.390	INDS. ENG.	27.7	0.00	14	38950	1758	0.45	0.45	0.0
0.800	0.580	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	2	0.00	3	25000	15750	0.65	0.63	-0.2
0.820	0.580	NATL. POULTRY	2	0.00	8	12473	9496	0.77	0.76	-0.1
0.950	0.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.6	0.00	15	17500	1213	0.66	0.65	-0.1
GRAND TOTAL										
112 161809 84308										

Packers are Super Bowl champs again

NEW ORLEANS (R) — Somewhere Vince Lombardi is smiling — the Green Bay Packers are Super Bowl champions again.

Twenty-nine years after the Lombardi-coached Packers won the last of three consecutive National Football League championships, the sport's most famed franchise is back on top as Green Bay beat the New England Patriots 35-21 to win Super Bowl XXXI on Sunday.

"It's the Vince Lombardi trophy, so it's going back home," said ecstatic Packers receiver Antonio Freeman, who caught the longest touchdown pass in Super Bowl history — an 81-yard bomb from Green Bay quarterback Brett Favre.

Favre threw two touchdown passes and ran for another to complete a brilliant season in which he was named the league's Most Valuable Player.

But the game's MVP honours went to return specialist Desmond Howard, the former Heisman trophy winner who became the first special teams player to be named Super Bowl MVP.

Howard had a record-setting day, including a spectacular 99-yard kick return for a touchdown late in the third quarter just when it appeared the Patriots had got back into the game.

"He's a great guy, he's rejuvenated his career. That return was unbelievable," said Favre, who completed 14 of 27 passes for 246 yards and did not throw an interception.

Howard returned four kicks for 154 yards and six punts for a Super Bowl record 90 yards more, a total of 244-return yards — also a record.

The 99-yard kick return was the longest in NFL post-season history.

And his first punt return of the game, a 32-yarder, put Green Bay in excellent position to score its first touchdown — a 54-yard pass by Favre to Andre Rison.

"I was so excited when it worked out just the way we practiced it," said Favre. "It hasn't really hit us yet that we're Super Bowl champions."

The victory marked the 13th consecutive win for the National Football Conference team in the Super Bowl. It was also the first title for several veteran players, most notably future Hall of Fame defensive end Reggie White, who sacked new England quarterback Drew Bledsoe three times.

"Now I can sit back with my son for years and watch the highlights of this Super Bowl and he can see daddy getting three sacks," beamed the 12-year veteran.

"Today God was a Green Bay Packer," said White, an ordained minister.

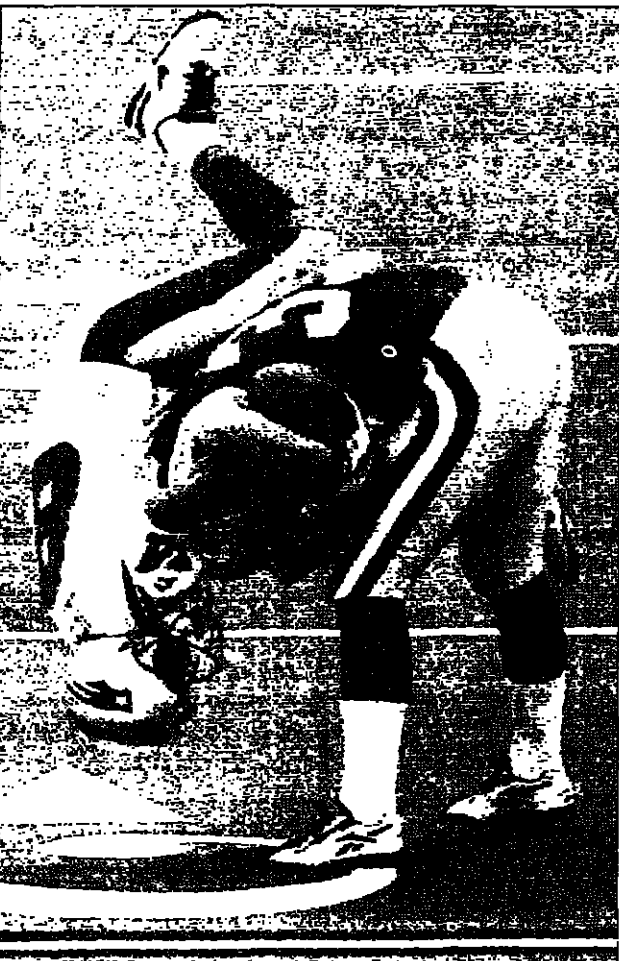
"When I come down from the high I'm on, maybe I'll realise what I did." "I'm really humbled by this experience. This is the greatest group of players I've ever been around," said emotional Green Bay coach Mike Holmgren.

The defeat cost New England's Bill Parcells a chance to become the first coach to win Super Bowls with two different teams. He won twice with the New York Giants.

"No one could be more disappointed than I am because I do think we had



Curtis Martin (C) of the New England Patriots breaks through LeRoy Butler (L) of the Green Bay Packers to score a touchdown in the third quarter of Super Bowl XXXI at the Superdome in New Orleans. The Packers Doug Evans (R) tries to help (Reuters photo)



Green Bay Packers safety Mike Prior flips New England's Shawn Jefferson off his back after intercepting a Drew Bledsoe pass in the second quarter during Super Bowl XXXI (Reuters photo)



Green Bay Packers future Hall of Fame defensive end Reggie White walks across the field with the Lombardi Trophy following the Packers' victory over the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI (Reuters photo)

a chance there for a moment," said Parcells, who is widely expected to leave the Patriots for another coaching job next season.

"You never know when this opportunity is going to come again, so I'm grateful I had the chance to be here," Parcells said.

Conventional wisdom that says a team must establish a ball-control running game to win a championship went out the window almost immediately as Favre and Bledsoe took to the air early and often in a classic quarterback duel in the first half.

Bledsoe was red-hot in the first quarter, completing 8-of-15 passes for 123 yards and two touchdowns, the second putting New England ahead 14-10.

But Bledsoe finished with four interceptions, and those turnovers, combined with Howard's heroics, did in the Patriots.

"The Packers made more big plays than we

did...And they basically played a mistake-free football game," said Bledsoe. "My hat's off to them."

The Packers seized the early momentum on Green Bay's second play from scrimmage as Favre found Rison streaking past defender Otis Smith and delivered a perfect touchdown pass.

Rison was so far ahead of Smith that he slowed to high-step into the end zone.

Bledsoe's first interception, when Doug Evans stepped in front of Patriots receiver Terry Glenn for the pickoff, led to a 37-yard Chris Jackson field goal and a 10-0 Green Bay lead.

But Bledsoe then went to work, moving his team up the field, and a pass interference penalty by Green Bay's Craig Newsome put the ball on the 1-yard-line.

On the next play, Bledsoe found Keith Byars in the back of the end zone and the Patriots were on the scoreboard.

trailing 10-7. On their next possession, Bledsoe connected with Glenn on a 44-yard pass to the Green Bay 4, and followed it with a touchdown pass to tight end Ben Coates for a 14-10 New England lead with two and a half minutes to go in the first quarter. The lead held up until the first minute of the second quarter when Favre opened a Green Bay drive with his 81-yard bomb to a streaking free man for a 17-14 advantage. The Packers never trailed again.

A 32-yard Jackie field goal with 8:15 left in the half increased Green Bay's lead to 20-14 and the Packers added another touchdown before the half was over.

Green Bay made it 27-14 with 1:11 left in the half when Favre capped a nine-play, 74-yard drive by scrambling for a touchdown from the 2-yard line.

The shootout mentality calmed down in the second half as both teams' defences began asserting

themselves. But the Patriots made another run at the title late in the third quarter.

Bledsoe directed an eight-play, 53-yard scoring drive as Curtis Martin barreled 18 yards through the middle of the Green Bay defence for a touchdown that brought New England within 27-21 with 3:27 left in the quarter.

But the New England euphoria was short-lived as Howard took the Adam Vinatieri kickoff and galloped away on his historic run that put a spike through the hearts of Patriots fans.

The Patriots never really recovered from the shock of surrendering the touchdown and a two-point conversion that put them 14 points in a hole so soon after closing the gap to realistic striking distance.

"I think what really deflated them was Desmond," White said. "When he ran that touchdown back that really

European soccer roundup

Italian connection inspires Chelsea

LONDON (R) — Chelsea's multi-national team produced one of their most eye-catching displays under manager Ruud Gullit. Italians Gianluca Vialli and Gianfranco Zola supplying three of their goals in a dramatic 4-2 English F.A. Cup win over Liverpool.

Former European champions Milan and Benfica also slumped to weekend defeats as the League leaders in Italy (Juventus), Spain (Real Madrid) and France (Monaco) all won.

Following is a round-up of the soccer action from around Europe this weekend:

England

Chelsea staged an outstanding comeback to beat Liverpool 4-2 in the fourth round of the F.A. Cup after trailing 2-0 at half-time. Newcastle were knocked out after squandering a 1-0 lead at home to Nottingham Forest, who fought back to win through two goals from Ian Woan.

In Saturday's Cup matches minor league Woking scored with seconds remaining at Premier League Coventry to earn a 1-1 draw. Huddersfield, the only other minor league side in the competition, gave Middlesbrough the fright of their lives but eventually went down 3-2.

First division Bradford beat Everton 3-2 at Goodison Park and Second Division Wrexham beat hapless West Ham 1-0 in a third round replay.

Holders Manchester United looked to have secured their passage into

the fifth round when they went 1-0 up against Wimbledon after 89 minutes but the Londoners forced a replay with an equaliser deep into injury time.

Italy

Milan's fading hopes of retaining their title all but disappeared after a humiliating 3-1 defeat at second-from-bottom Verona left them 10th.

Arrigo Sacchi's side have now lost seven league matches this season — as many as they have won — and lie eleven points behind leaders Juventus. 3-1 winners over bottom club Reggiana.

Juve's Michele Padovano, playing against his old club, scored one goal and made another to keep the European champions four points clear at the top with 36 points from 18 matches.

Second-place Sampdoria kept Juve in their sights after coming from 2-1 down to defeat Perugia 5-2 thanks to their prolific front-line partnership of Vincenzo Montella and Roberto Mancini, both of whom scored twice.

Vicenza, convincing 3-2 winners over Fiorentina, moved into third.

Spain

Brazilian striker Ronaldo celebrated his FIFA world player of the year award with a first-half hat-trick as Barcelona thrashed Rayo Vallecano 6-0 on Sunday. Barcelona stay second in the Spanish championship, three points behind Real

Madrid, who were led to a 4-0 victory over Celta Vigo by another Brazilian, defender Roberto Carlos.

With the nearest challenger now seven points adrift, the league title again looks like a two-club race.

Third-placed Deportivo Coruna lost 1-0 at bottom club Extremadura on Saturday, while Real Sociedad went down by the same score in the dying moments of their game at struggling Logrones.

The game between Tenerife and sixth-placed Atletico Madrid was postponed after 10 members of the champions' squad caught gastro-enteritis.

France

Monaco stretched their lead at the top of the French League to seven points with a 2-0 win over their nearest rivals Paris Saint-Germain.

Marseille dented in-form Bastia's title hopes by beating them 1-0. Bastia had won seven of their eight previous matches.

Portugal

Benfica, without suspended captain Joao Pinto, lost 2-1 at home to Belenenses and slip to third in the table. It was their third consecutive defeat and earned them boos from their home fans.

Sporting beat Boavista 3-1 at home to go second. Reigning champions Porto, who meet Gil Vicente on Monday, are 10 points clear and look to have the title safely in their grasp.

Rodman gets Converse contract

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Dennis Rodman, suspended from professional basketball for kicking a cameraman, nonetheless received a multiyear contract to promote Converse sports shoes.

Terms of the deal announced Sunday with the Chicago Bulls' star forward were not disclosed.

"We look forward to Dennis' imminent return to the NBA and the world champion Chicago Bulls," Converse Vice President James Solomon said in a statement.

"He is one of the best defensive players in the league who has a passion and commitment for the true essence of the game of basketball and who is recognised for his raw, emotional style on the court."

Rodman, who has been suspended without pay for at least 11 games and fined for kicking a court-side cameraman, said last week he will play for free to make amends in response to a plea from President Bill Clinton.

He reached an out-of-court settlement for \$200,000 with cameraman Eugene Amos whom he kicked in the groin during a game in Minneapolis last week.

But he has been suspended without pay for at least 11 games by the National Basketball Association and fined \$25,000 dollars for his behaviour.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Cantona dives out

LONDON (AFP) — Eric Cantona, vital to Manchester United's bid for the FA Cup and English Premiership, will be out for two games after being booked for diving in Saturday's FA Cup fourth round draw with Wimbledon.

The booking took him past 21 disciplinary points, which automatically incurred a two-match ban. It is Cantona's first suspension since being suspended for eight months for his kung-fu attack on a Crystal Palace supporter at Selhurst park two years ago. Cantona will miss the fifth round FA Cup home tie against QPR if United win next week's replay against Wimbledon, as well as the Premiership game at Arsenal on February 19. If United are knocked out of the Cup by Wimbledon, he will miss the Arsenal game and the visit to Chelsea on February 22.

Bartova beats indoor record

REYKJAVIK (AFP) — Czech pole vaulter Daniela Bartova beat her own European indoor record last weekend when she cleared 4.31 metres at a 90-year anniversary competition of Icelandic athletics in Reykjavik. Bartova, whose previous record was 4.30m, then had three close attempts at the world record of 4.41m.

Prost aiming for Melbourne

PARIS (AFP) — Former four-times world champion Alain Prost, trying to buy out Ligier, hopes to line up a new Formula One motor racing team at the Australian Grand Prix which opens the season at Melbourne in March. "But there is still a long way to go in a very complex business project," he told the sports daily L'Equipe.

Inter eye Monaco defender

MONACO (AFP) — Italian side Inter Milan have approached Monaco about defender Patrick Blondeau but the French League leaders are unlikely to let the newly-capped defender go. Italian clubs have until Jan. 31 to beat the transfer deadline.

Marseille rule out Pedros move

MARSEILLE (AFP) — Olympique Marseille general manager Jean-Michel Roussier has ruled out a transfer of French international forward Reynald Pedros to Italian side Parma. "Nobody has made a firm bid," he said. Marseille have put a 25 million Franc (\$5million) price tag on Pedros, who has been having an unhappy time at Marseille since his close-season move from Nantes. He was booed off when substituted in the French league match against Bastia on Saturday.



Adam Malysz of Poland soars in a jump in Hakuba. Malysz points against stiff competition

Tomba, Comp

PORTLAND, ORE. (AP) — The

Portland, Ore. area is a popular destination for winter sports enthusiasts. The area offers a variety of activities, including skiing, snowboarding, and ice skating.

The area is also known for its scenic views and outdoor recreation. Visitors can enjoy the beauty of the Pacific Northwest and the surrounding mountains.

The area is a great place to visit for anyone looking for a winter getaway. There are many things to do and see, and the weather is perfect for outdoor activities.

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TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "1"

Eddie Murphy & Angela Bassett... in
VAMPIRE IN
BROOKLYN

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"

Michael Douglas & Elite Ping... in
THE AMERICAN
PRESIDENT

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA

Keanu Reeves & Dolph
Lundgren...in
Johnny Mnemonic

Shows: 12:00, 2:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Arnold Schwarzenegger...in
ERASER
Shows: 12:15, 2:15, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
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Beirut police, squatters clash; at least 18 injured

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Thirteen policemen and five squatters were reported injured Monday in clashes over dynamiting to make way for a road underpass in a midtown Beirut neighbourhood.

The clash in the Qantari Hotel district, an area devastated during the 1975-90 civil war, began in the morning when squatters threw bottles and rocks at construction workers to block explosives from being readied for use.

Helmeted riot police, carrying shields and batons, were called in. A clash ensued and 13 policemen, including an officer, suffered light to moderate injuries, police Captain Mohammad Sharara said at the scene.

Squatters said five women were injured, including one hit on the head with a baton. The squatters claim the blasting can damage the already shaky, war-damaged buildings where they live.

There were no reports of arrests. By mid-morning, at least 70 policemen surrounded the site, sandwiched between the burnt-out hulk of the Holiday Inn hotel and the 40-storey Beirut Trade Centre tower, the capital's tallest building about 500 metres away.

Three fire engines stood by, ready to intervene with high pressure hoses to control the crowd. Armed policemen took up positions on rooftops and behind the riot police, but no shots were fired.

But the situation calmed after workers finished dynamiting all charges planned for the day. A police officer at the scene said controlled explosions to clear rocky terrain would continue through Thursday.

Policemen confiscated film of the trouble from two news photographers. Ali Khalil, a Shiite member of parliament for southern Lebanon, mediated between police and the squatters.

"The siege has provoked the squatters," he said, maintaining that "the explosions threaten people's lives."

The dispute began several days when squatters, about 700 Shiites mainly from an Israeli-occupied border strip in southern Lebanon, blocked the construction work, claiming the blasting was hazardous to their homes.

Officials of Solidere, the \$1 billion company entrusted with rebuilding the downtown district, could not be immediately reached for comment.

Most of the squatters in Beirut's war-devastated downtown have been compensated and cleared from buildings. However, some

remain amid the reconstruction work, awaiting government compensation which has been delayed by lack of funds.

Abdul Hamid Nasser, an official of the fund for the displaced, confirmed that the squatters were refugees from South Lebanon who were refusing to evacuate their houses.

"All they really want is to double or triple the amount of compensation they are due to be paid and which they have so far refused to receive," the official said.

Mr. Nasser said all families from the border zone were allocated \$8,000 — \$3,000 more than other displaced families — to evacuate, the apartments they have been occupying since the 1975-1990 civil war.

"They have refused to cooperate and last week they also threw stones at workers. All this is to try to get more money, but we cannot accept this," the official said.

The fund is charged with paying compensation to more than half a million displaced. It has so far paid off 40 per cent of them, sometimes at high prices which benefit senior members of political parties.

"The operation 'return of the displaced' has cost \$434 million up until the end of 1996. It is financed mostly through foreign loans.



DEMAND FOR PRISONER RELEASE: Palestinian women demonstrate outside the Palestinian Legislative Council compound in Gaza on Monday demanding that the Palestinian National Authority exert pressure on Israel to release their sons from Israeli jails. The demonstrators tried to break into the building but Palestinian security prevented them. Large number of Palestinians are held in Israeli prisons. Israel is expected to release some of them on the occasion of Eid Al Fitr which is due after two weeks (AFP photo)

Syria says Saudis back its stand in peace talks

RIYADH (Agencies) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa said here Monday that Saudi Arabia supported Syria's conditions for the resumption of stalled peace talks with Israel.

Mr. Sharaa, on a tour of Gulf states and Yemen with Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, said that Riyadh offered its support to Syria during a "positive and friendly" meeting with King Fahd late Sunday.

"The Saudis reiterated their support for the Syrian position, which demands a restarting of the negotiations (with Israel) at the point where they ended following a commitment to a withdrawal from the Golan," Mr. Sharaa told AFP.

Syria insists that negotiations with the Jewish state, on ice since February last year, must be restarted at the point where they were broken off with the previous Labour government in Israel.

Damascus said Labour made a verbal commitment to hand back the Golan Heights, which Israel seized during the 1967 war and "annexed" in 1981, and which Syria insists must be returned under any peace deal.

The new right-wing Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for talks with Syria to restart "without pre-conditions" and has suggested Damascus bring the issue of the Golan to the negotiating table.

However, at the same time Mr. Netanyahu has firmly ruled out handing back the strategic plateau.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported that the United States had secretly freed Israel from the Labour commitment on the Golan in a letter to Mr. Netanyahu.

An Arab diplomat added that the Syrian

envoys were trying to drum up Arab support to cope with "pressure exerted by the Americans to resume the negotiations from zero."

In remarks published Monday by the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat, Mr. Sharaa said there "was no initiative for now to resume the negotiations" with Israel and that the situation was "completely blocked."

Mr. Sharaa also denied "any direct or indirect contact with Israel."

The Israeli foreign ministry has said the two countries exchanged diplomatic messages as part of a search for a formula to help restart the talks.

Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa later on Monday flew to Kuwait where they met the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and delivered a message from President Hafez Al Assad, the official Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported.

The Syrian officials are also due to visit Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Most Gulf Arab states have made any normalisation with Israel conditional on progress in the Syrian-Israeli track of the Middle East peace process, although Qatar and Oman agreed last year to exchange trade missions.

Qatar and Oman froze their fledgling ties with the Jewish state late last year after the Palestinian-Israeli talks stalled, but Oman said it was ready to renew contacts after Israel redeployed from the West Bank town of Hebron.

Arab diplomats in Riyadh added that Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa might ask the Gulf countries to maintain their decision to freeze contacts until there is progress on the Syrian track.

Ambassador Shamir to quit post in February

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israeli Ambassador to Jordan Shimon Shamir will leave his post at the end of February when a two-year agreement he signed with the Israeli foreign ministry expires, an embassy spokesman said Monday.

Shalom Tourgeman rejected as untrue suggestions that Mr. Shamir's departure was differences between the ambassador and the government of Benjamin Netanyahu.

"There is no political reason behind the ambassador's decision to request the foreign ministry to be relieved of his duties at the end of the two-year contract he signed" when the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin asked him to take up the post, Mr. Tourgeman told the Jordan Times.

Ambassador Shamir, in line with the agreement, wrote to the foreign ministry about six weeks ago that his contract was finishing at the end of February and that he wished to return to the academic life at Tel Aviv University, said the spokesman.

Mr. Shamir was appointed in March 1995 by the previous government headed by the left-leaning Labour Party after Jordan and Israel signed their October 1994 peace treaty.

Mr. Shamir, a Princeton University graduate, taught modern Middle East history at Tel Aviv University for five years before he came to Jordan. In 1988-1990, he served as ambassador to Egypt, where he established the Israeli academic centre to promote scientific and intellectual dialogue between Egyptians and Israelis.

According to reports in the Israeli press, Oded Eran, deputy director-general of the economic affairs department of the foreign ministry, is one of the candidates to replace Mr. Shamir in Amman.

Mr. Tourgeman's comments confirmed a report carried by the Jerusalem-based Al Quds Press that Mr. Shamir had said in his request to the foreign ministry that his reasons to quit the post was personal.

Mr. Shamir himself told Israeli Radio that there were no political reasons behind his refusal to renew his contract.

The Israeli daily Maariv, quoting foreign ministry sources, said that no one within the ministry had tried to convince Mr. Shamir to renew his current contract so as to extend his term.

The paper also reported that one of the candidates for Mr. Shamir's replacement was Mr. Eran and that if Mr. Eran refused the position, the Israeli government would find another candidate closer to the ruling Likud Party.

Woman seeking luck gored by elephant

BANGKOK (R) — A frightened male elephant gored a pregnant woman in the thigh while she was crawling under his belly for good luck. Thai police said on Monday. They said the jittery pachyderm attacked Wien Sudpleum, who is eight months pregnant, on Saturday as she was beginning her third trip under his belly. She was crawling under the elephant in the hope it would bring her luck and allow an easy delivery of her baby, said police in Phantum Thani, about 50 kilometres north of Bangkok. Instead, she landed in hospital with a thigh injury after the elephant, frightened by barking dogs, gored her with his tusks. The mahout taking care of the elephant was arrested briefly and released after he agreed to pay 6,000 baht (\$240) compensation to the injured woman, police said. Many Thais believe if they crawl three times under the belly of an elephant, considered a noble animal, they will have good luck.

10 Commandments for British vicars

LONDON (R) — British church officials leapt to the defence of priests who cannot rattle off all 10 Commandments, saying it was substance not words that counted. A poll by the Sunday Times found only 34 per cent of 200 Anglican priests polled could recite all 10 without help. "When people are put on the spot like this of course they can't remember," a Church of England spokesman said. "Given time they would recall them." The poll found that most clergy knew the commandments prohibiting adultery and coveting one's neighbour's wife, but got a little fuzzy on the details of some of the other eight. John Redwood, an outspoken Conservative member of parliament, said he was amazed at the clergy's ignorance.

Germans faithful to surnames

BONN (R) — Thousands of Germans are keeping unfortunate surnames such as Kotz (vomit), Moerder (murder), Bratuhhn (roast chicken) and even Hitler, even though they could legally change them, a magazine reported. The German phonebook lists hundreds of people with the surname Faul (lazy), Fett (fat), Dreckmann (filth-man), Dumm (stupid) and Schwein (pig), the weekly Focus magazine said in an advance release ahead of publication. Unflatteringly named Germans said that they mainly had problems with their names as children and that later in life they had decided not to bow to social pressure to change them.

Family takes out asking not to be robbed

LEON, Mexico (R) — A Mexican family took out a newspaper advertisement asking crooks to please stop robbing the family. "Mister robbers, you have cleaned us out... please do not visit us anymore, it's not worth your while," the Robles family wrote in a newspaper ad in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato. The ad recounts how the Robles family was held up in a local restaurant on Dec. 27, losing their money and jewels. A month later, two armed robbers held up the family again in their home, taking nearly everything of value. "The only things we have left is our refrigerator, our television set and a VCR," the family said.

'U.S. more favourable to Israeli arms requests'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The U.S. Defense Department has warned to Israeli arms requests since the recent agreement on Hebron which put the Israeli-Palestinian peace process back on track, a senior Israeli military official was quoted Monday as saying. "The positive climate created by the Hebron agreement has made it easier for Israel to obtain U.S. military goods," the independent daily Haaretz quoted the anonymous officer as saying.

The officer was speaking following talks in Washington between the Israeli deputy army chief of staff, General Matan Vilnai, and U.S. defence officials responsible for military aid to the Jewish state.

Among other develop-

ments, Haaretz said, the United States agreed to move up delivery of several weapons systems from 1999 to next year, including Blackhawk helicopters and SAAR-5 patrol boats. Israel receives \$1.8 billion in U.S. military aid each year.

After months of U.S.-brokered negotiations, Israel and the Palestinian National Authority finally agreed on Israel's long-delayed troop withdrawal from Hebron on Jan. 15.

The agreement and subsequent Israeli pullback from most of the West Bank city was the first breakthrough in the peace process since the right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was elected to office in May.

Hizbollah predicts new Israeli assault

BEIRUT (R) — The leader of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah group was quoted on Monday as saying Israel might launch a wide-scale attack against guerrillas and Syrian troops in Lebanon.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of the Shi'ite Muslim group, said the aim of such a military campaign would be to impose Israel's conditions for the resumption of the suspended peace talks with Beirut and Damascus.

"Hoping to force Lebanon and Syria back to negotiations under its conditions, Israel might resort to a wide-scale aggression if it proves to be the only and best means (to reach the goal)," Sheikh Nasrallah, told Al-Safir newspaper in an interview.

He said Israel's "obstinacy in peace talks... and the addition of hundreds of millions of dollars to the Israeli defence budget indicate that everything in Israel is going in the direction of a war."

Sheikh Nasrallah said the possible military operation would be larger than an April 1996 Israeli blitz on Lebanon but smaller than the 1982 all-out Israeli invasion. Last April, Israel killed more than 200 people in air, sea and land bombardment.

The Shi'ite Muslim cleric said a possible scenario for an Israeli blitz would include air raids on Syrian troops in Lebanon, on Hizbollah and even on the "Lebanese army" in an attempt to dismantle it.

Syria has 35,000 troops deployed across two-thirds of Lebanon and is the country's main power broker.

Sheikh Nasrallah, however, warned that such an Israeli attack "could open the door for a regional war."

"Israel will be taking a risk (by hitting Syrian targets in Lebanon) because it will not be able to predict the Syrian reaction to such attack aimed at its direct military presence on the Lebanese platform," he said.

Asked to comment on growing expectations of a possible Israeli strike on Syria, Sheikh Nasrallah said: "A war on Syria inside Syria does not change the equation. It changes the region, because such a move might blow up the whole peace process."

Hizbollah (party of God) leads a guerrilla war to oust Israeli troops from a 15-kilometre South Lebanon occupation zone. In 1996, Hizbollah guerrillas killed 27 Israeli soldiers inside the buffer zone.

Peace talks between Lebanon and Israel — launched in 1991 — have been suspended for nearly three years. Talks between Syria and Israel, stalled over withdrawal from the Israeli occupied Golan Heights and the nature of future ties, have been suspended for 11 months.

Egypt allows in expellees on health grounds

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt allowed 10 Palestinians who have been stranded in a no-man's land on the Egyptian-Libyan border to enter Egypt on Monday for medical treatment, a U.N. official said.

The Palestinians evacuated from a make-shift desert camp include pregnant women and people with heart conditions, said Panos Momtzis, spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Cairo.

"They were in critical condition because they have been stranded at the border for 16 months in conditions that are really unfit for humans to live," Mr. Momtzis said.

He gave no other details of the Palestinians' conditions.

The 10 Palestinians bring to 13 those who have been evacuated from the camp to Egypt for medical treatment, Mr. Momtzis said.

Twelve other people in the camp are still in need of medical attention, suffering from such illnesses as diabetes and asthma.

Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi threw hundreds of Palestinians out of his country in 1994 to prove that the Israeli-Palestinian peace accords were a sham since millions of Palestinian refugees had no guarantee of return home.

Many became trapped on the border because they had no proper papers to enter other countries, and Libya refused to take them back.

About 150 remain in the camp, trapped in a trash-strewn strip infested with scorpions. They are facing another cold winter in the desert, where temperatures reach freezing levels at night.

Last week, the Palestinians hurled stones at Libyan officials who tried to bring the camp residents back to Libya.

The camp residents have several times refused Libyan invitations to return, fearing they would go back and find no jobs or houses to live in.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syrians allowed to subscribe to Internet

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrians will be able to subscribe to the Internet in six months, the official Tishrin newspaper said Monday, adding that Syria has set up its own Internet site. The site has about 150 subscribers from the political, economic, social and cultural sectors and offers information on Syrian civilisation and culture, the press said. However, average Syrians will be able to get online in six months, Tishrin said.

Militants kill Egyptian ex-policeman

CAIRO (AP) — Suspected militants Monday shot to death a retired policeman who they suspected was informing on extremist activities in southern Egypt, police said. The victim was identified as 50-year-old Toony Mahmoud Abdul Rahman, said police officials, speaking under customary rules of anonymity. He was shot as he got into a car at his farm near Malawi, 260 kilometres south of Cairo. The assailants fled, and a search was being conducted for them. More than 1,000 people have died in violence since radicals began an anti-government campaign in 1992. The radicals want to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak's secular regime and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

3 killed, 3 injured in grenade blast in Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — Three people, including two children, were killed and three others injured when a grenade discovered by a group of children in the southeast region of Geng exploded, the Anatolia news agency reported on Monday. The agency said the children began playing with the grenade and tossing it around after finding it in an empty field. The region of Geng, in the province of Bingol, is at the centre of the 13-year-old conflict between Kurdish rebels seeking a independent homeland and government troops.

Saudi lawyer gets forensic data on Dhahran murder

DUBAI (R) — The Saudi lawyer of two British nurses charged with murder in the kingdom has received the forensic medical report on the killing and expects the final police report in the next few days, newspapers said on Monday.

The reports are considered key elements in the case and could pave the way for the trial of Deborah Parry, 41, and Lucille McLaughlan, 31, who have been accused of murdering in December an Australian colleague Yvonne Gilford, 55, at a Saudi hospital complex where they worked.

If found guilty, they could be publicly beheaded by the sword. Legal sources say it would be the first time Western women have been beheaded in the kingdom.

"The office of Salah Al Hujailan... received the report which the forensic pathologists prepared on the crime," the Saudi-owned daily Al Sharq Al Awsat said.

The office will receive the final Saudi police report about the crime within a few short days," it added, quoting an interview with the lawyer.

The women chose Mr. Hujailan, a prominent Saudi attorney educated in Cairo and the United States, as their defence lawyer on Dec. 30, 10 days after being charged with murdering Gilford at the King Fahd Military Medical Complex in Dhahran, eastern Saudi Arabia.

The Australian nurse was found murdered in her dormitory room at the hospital on Dec. 11. She had been stabbed, bludgeoned with a hammer and suffocated.

In accordance with Saudi law, there will be no prosecution lawyer at the trial, only the police report with a judge handling the rest of the prosecution case. No date for the hearing has been announced.

If found guilty and sentenced to death, Gilford's family could still spare the lives of the women by accepting blood money instead of execution.

But Gilford's family in Australia have ruled out a clemency appeal, saying the two should face the maximum punishment.

According to Monday's Al Eqtisadiyah daily, Mr. Hujailan said the victim's family still insisted on the death penalty, but added he hoped they would change their mind after the police reports had been revealed.

Miyet named U.N. peace

PARIS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has named French diplomat Henriette Miéret as his special representative for the Middle East peacekeeping operations. The 50-year-old Miéret, who has worked for the U.N. since 1982, will be based in Geneva. She will be the first woman to hold the post before the current incumbent, Hans Eberhard Holleschlag, leaves his post in December. In another appointment, General Håkan Abaza, a Swedish military officer, will be named as the U.N. Secretary-General's special representative for the Middle East. The U.N. Secretary-General's office said the appointments would be announced on Tuesday. The U.N. Secretary-General's office said the appointments would be announced on Tuesday. The U.N. Secretary-General's office said the appointments would be announced on Tuesday.

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ing receives spell calls

King Hussein on Monday received a phone call from a Saudi Arabian prince who said he was under a spell. The prince, who is a member of the Saudi royal family, said he was under a spell and needed help. King Hussein, who is the King of Jordan, said he would try to help the prince. The prince said he was under a spell and needed help. The prince said he was under a spell and needed help.

By a Jordan Staff

AMMAN — The Palestinian Authority (PA) today discussed the day's events and the work of the PA. The PA said it was working to resolve the situation in the West Bank and Gaza. The PA said it was working to resolve the situation in the West Bank and Gaza.

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